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Historic Sketch of
CHURCHES IN DUNSTABLE-NASHUA, N.H.

— *From A.D. 1685 to 1885* —

By PROF. JOHN WESLEY CHURCHILL
With Notes etc.

By CHARLES C. MORGAN

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HISTORY OF
The First Church in Dunstable-
Nashua, N. H.

AND OF

LATER CHURCHES THERE

AS SKETCHED BY

PROF. JOHN WESLEY CHURCHILL

IN AN ADDRESS TO

THE NASHUA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER 16, 1885

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND EDITORIAL NOTES
AND A BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH OF
PROF. CHURCHILL

BY

CHARLES CARROLL MORGAN

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BY CHARLES CARROLL MORGAN

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INTRODUCTION.

The following address by Prof. John Wesley Churchill is now printed, for the first time, in enduring form. It was published originally in the columns of the Nashua Daily Telegraph and of the Nashua Daily Gazette immediately after its delivery. Copies of these newspapers containing the address can be found at present only in private hands, are very few, and have been kept with extreme care lest they become lost or destroyed. Unfortunately they are disfigured with many typographical errors and other mistakes such as are hardly avoidable in hasty journalistic work.

In the hope to correct such faults, the editor of this book wrote to the widow of Prof. Churchill, asking if his manuscript of the address could be had, to aid in the work. The following gracious letter came in reply.

Andover, Mass., April 16, 1917.

Mr. Charles C. Morgan: —

My dear Sir, — Circumstances have delayed an answer to your kind and courteous letter of March 19.

I regret to tell you that the manuscript you desire is not to be found among my files of papers. I have a distinct remembrance that the address was written under adverse circumstances as to time and place, on account of Mr. Churchill's seminary duties in Andover and the research work in Nashua. Almost all of the writing was accomplished while journeying between the two places, and the manuscript was necessarily marred by erasures and interlining. I recall too that the press reports were not satisfactory, and that Mr. Churchill intended to re-

duce and condense *very much* the printed matter, as well as to correct errors.

As I had not seen a printed copy of the address, I turned over your letter, with stamps you enclosed, to my brother-in-law, Mr. Elbert L. Churchill, Arlington, Mass., Cooperative Bank. He thought we might possibly have a condensed printed copy. He will communicate with you in regard to the matter.

But I wish to thank you personally for your kind and appreciative memorial words. I am grateful that my husband's friends in his old home hold his memory in honored remembrance.

Most sincerely yours,

MARY DONALD CHURCHILL.

(Mrs. John Wesley Churchill.)

After the lapse of time enough for careful search, the following agreeable letter came from Prof. Churchill's brother.

Arlington, Mass., May 14, 1917.

Mr. Charles C. Morgan,
Nashua, N. H.

Dear Sir, — Your letter dated March 19, 1917, addressed to Mrs. J. Wesley Churchill, Andover, Mass., was duly received and has been handed to me for reply.

I regret to say that the documents referred to are not in my possession, and Mrs. Churchill informs me that they are probably destroyed.

I remember very distinctly and pleasantly the occasion referred to, and that I was very proud of my brother for the part taken by him.

The newspaper reports of his address doubtless will be the only record obtainable, and I am sorry that they

are found to be inaccurate. If at some future time these papers should be found and I have knowledge of the same, I shall be pleased to forward them to the church authorities, to be disposed of as they shall see fit.

Yours respectfully,

ELBERT L. CHURCHILL.

In Mrs. Churchill's letter, she speaks of her husband's research work in Nashua. Undoubtedly representatives of the various churches, mentioned, were glad to supply him with copies from their church records and with other useful information. Yet it is plain he was unsparing in his personal efforts; since a unity of purpose and conscientiousness of endeavor is manifest throughout.

As the greater part of his address was written in the cars, while he was journeying to and fro many times between Andover and Nashua, he was forced to such hasty composition as made later revision and improvement desirable. The need of revision probably was more apparent to him than to others. Undoubtedly his quick eye noticed that a few of the words he had used were not such as he preferred; that sentences he meant to divide were left unbroken; that transpositions he had intended were overlooked; and that the newspaper punctuation frequently failed to bring out his meaning as he desired. But his admirable elocution probably did much to hide these imperfections, and it is quite likely his listeners scarcely noticed them.

At this late day, an attempt at a thorough revision, when so little can be found to aid in the work, would be presumptuous. Yet, on re-reading the address, it is thought well to make such amendments in form as there is good reason to believe he desired, but without any material changes in substance.

Although Mrs. Churchill says he "intended to reduce and condense *very much* the printed matter," no alterations of this nature have been attempted.

The most striking characteristics of Prof. Churchill's address are the broad tolerance and loving spirit that pervade it from beginning to end. His keenly sympathetic nature, always alive to the feelings of others, is everywhere apparent.

It is believed that the brief biographical sketch at the end of the book will be welcome to many readers.

It may be well to supplement what is said by Prof. Churchill, on page 27 of his address, with the following statement:—

The first armed resistance by any of the American colonists to the tyranny of Great Britain was in disapproval of a royal decree forbidding their importation of arms or military stores. During the progress of former events leading up to the Revolutionary War, the Colonial Assembly of New Hampshire, early in 1774, appointed a committee of correspondence for promoting concert of action with the other colonies in protective measures. Soon afterwards the Assembly brought about the election of two delegates to the First Continental Congress, which met in Philadelphia on September 5th of that year. One of these delegates was John Sullivan, a capable lawyer whose office was in Durham, N. H., and who was a major in the N. H. militia. Sullivan acquitted himself satisfactorily, as a member of this congress, in companionship with such famous provincials as George Washington, John Adams, Edward Rutledge and others. In December of the same year, tidings were received of the royal decree just mentioned and of the expected arrival of ves-

sels bringing troops to secure the retention in British possession of Fort William and Mary commanding the entrance to Portsmouth harbor. Immediately a small militia force was rallied, under the lead of Maj. Sullivan — with John Langdon, second in command, — and, on the night of December 14th, they surprised and captured the fort. Its little garrison of six was made prisoners, in spite of a determined resistance.

The next day, fifteen of the lighter cannon of the fort and all its small arms were removed, and were soon distributed privately in the neighboring towns. Nearly 200 kegs of powder that fell into the hands of the captors were secretly carried to Durham, where they were hidden for a time beneath the pulpit of its meeting-house. Afterwards they were stealthily conveyed to Charlestown, Mass., — reaching there just in time to replenish the scanty powder-supply of the American troops engaged in the Battle of Bunker Hill, and thus enabling them to more effectually check their British assailants.*

It will be noticed that the capture of Fort William and Mary occurred more than four months before the Battle of Lexington and Concord. This early event did much to fire the hearts of the New Hampshire colonists, and to prepare their hardy frontiersmen (trained as minutemen in Indian warfare) to snatch their arms when tidings of the struggle at Lexington reached them and to speed as fast as their horses could carry them to the neighborhood of Boston. It should be remembered that among these volunteers was Col. (afterwards Gen.) John Stark, the

* For an entertaining sketch of Sullivan — who, in June, 1775, was appointed by Congress a brigadier general, and commanded at Winter Hill during the siege of Boston — see "Colonial Life in New Hampshire," by James H. Fassett.

famous leader of New Hampshire rangers during the seven years of previous hostilities against the French and Indians. With him were many who shared in his experiences. Together they formed the left wing of the colonial troops at the Battle of Bunker Hill, and were the last to retire before the enemy. Indeed it is said that the New Hampshire frontiersmen, under the command of Col. Stark, Col. Reed and Col. Poor, made up a majority of the American soldiers in this first pitched battle of the Revolution.

Besides what is said hereafter of Mr. Kidder on page 26, it may be well to note the *legal* aspect of his case. As his "settlement" was of the kind explained in the paragraph beginning at the foot of page 11 (namely, a settlement for life — taking him "for better or worse," and being akin to a marriage dowry) it could be modified thereafter only by a new agreement between the parties. This fact was recognized by both; and a committee, mutually chosen, was authorized to make new terms. The committee — as it appears — arranged to have Mr. Kidder remain with the church, at least as its *nominal* pastor, so long as he was able in some measure to satisfactorily perform his ministerial duties. Probably the committee continued to serve as a permanent arbiter in the case. Just how early Rev. Mr. Sperry *began* to act as assistant pastor, we are not informed. But, on the 3d of November, 1813, — as shown on page 8 of the old Record Book of the Church, — Mr. Sperry was settled as the *regular* pastor, and so continued until his dismissal in 1819, about a year after Mr. Kidder's death.

CHARLES CARROLL MORGAN.

November, 1917.

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Raphael — A.D. 1483 to 1520.

Uffizi Gallery, Florence

YOUNG JOHN THE BAPTIST, POINTING THE WAY OF SALVATION.

ADDRESS TO THE NASHUA HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Note. For a needful understanding of the difficulties experienced in the preparation of this address and of the reason why its publication in book form has been so long delayed, it is desirable to read *first* the foregoing Introduction.

Old Mortality, the wandering religious enthusiast so vividly described by Sir Walter Scott, induced by motives of the most sincere but fanciful devotion, dedicated thirty years of his existence to clearing the moss from the gray tomb-stones, and renewing with his chisel the half-defaced inscriptions on the simple monuments of the deceased warriors of his church, who had fought, fallen and suffered for their religion in their struggles against the cruel tyranny of the Stuarts. On anniversary days like these, we consider, with Old Mortality, that we are "fulfilling a sacred duty while renewing to the eyes of posterity the decaying emblems of the zeal and sufferings of our ancestors." We brush the ancient dust from their names, we tear away the moss from the record of their deeds, and retrace the fading lines. In imagination we roll away the stone from their sepulchres and bid their revered forms to pass before us.

In paying this tribute to their memory, I am deeply sensible that grayer heads than mine should bend over the work; hands more skillful than mine should chisel deeper the inscriptions that shall render their memory fresher and more abiding. Sincere as is my self-distrust, there is encouragement in the thought that the occasion itself carries its own enjoyment in the quickening thoughts of kindred and ancestry, and in the realization of our connection with the achievements of the past.

Commemoration days like these, my fellow-citizens, are not only full of interest, they are exceedingly significant and instructive; we cherish them as we would the blossoms of Century Plants. We stand to-day on the verge of one of those great periods by which the age of states and nations is counted. We take a look backward that we may gather wisdom for the Unexplored that lies before us. Time, in his advance of two centuries, has thrown behind him a deep shadow, covering many a name, many a scene, and many an event inseparably intermingled with the fortunes of the present and the hopes of the future. You bid me take the antiquarian's torch and penetrate the dark corners, and seek for the hidden things of our history that you may have a distincter knowledge and a closer appreciation of the beginnings of our goodly heritage. We but discharge a debt of common gratitude in calling up to grateful recollection the men by whom our precious joint-inheritance was acquired, preserved and bequeathed. They ought not to be forgotten. We should be recreant sons of worthy sires if we displayed such an insensibility to our lineage from a brave and godly ancestry as to suffer this centennial season to pass unnoticed and unhonored.

The pious office to the Past, assigned me by the committee at whose invitation I occupy this place, has been limited to a distinct province in the history of our municipality. In discharging the honorable trust, I am anxious that this holy day should be occupied with thoughts and memories belonging to us, not merely as fellow-citizens and friends, as a band of brothers and sisters, but as members of a Christian community, as a Christian brotherhood, gathered around the ancestral hearthstone for praises and thanksgiving at Family Worship.

We are not without justification in our meeting to-day. True, our ancestors were not the Pilgrims themselves. The

era of the Puritans had just terminated when our own charter was granted. Half a century and more had passed since Carver and Bradford landed on Plymouth Rock. Old Simon Bradstreet, the "last of the Puritans," and the last Puritan Governor of Massachusetts, entered upon his office only four years after our First church was organized. Puritan severity was gradually softening. English habits, tastes and prejudices were modified in the Anglo-American society of the second generation in Massachusetts.

To the early settlers of Dunstable, portrayals of the deeds and sufferings of the Puritans in England and America were like tales of other times. No: we have no forefathers' rock to boast of; no charter oak; no cellar that concealed royal judges. Nevertheless, Puritan blood flows in our veins. Our ancestors helped to plant inestimable civil and religious institutions. The character of Old Dunstable as a town was sustained in early days upon the solid basis on which the Fathers of Massachusetts constructed their commonwealth — *the eternal principles of the Bible*. We may affirm of our ancestors, as we speak of the Pilgrims, that they were pre-eminently *religious* men.

Many of the first families of Dunstable came from Boston and the Old Massachusetts Bay Colony. We are within 40 years of being as old as the venerable city of Boston. With confidence and pride, then, may we claim our direct descent in *character* and in *principles* from the Pilgrim settlers of New England. Like the men of Plymouth, our fathers found the elements out of which they built their political system in God's written Revelation. The Bible furnished them with the forms and institutions of the State as well as of the Church. The Biblical principles for the formation of civil society, they organized and transmitted to us. "*Freedom in the Church, and Freedom in the State,*" a "Free Church in a Free State" were still

the rallying points of the fathers of Dunstable, as in the days when the domination of the English hierarchy was so galling, and hereditary ecclesiastical privileges were so oppressive and hateful to Robinson, Carver, and Bradford.

It was not the purely political part of the English Government that the Puritans objected to. They did not seek to dis sever the Church from the State. They were "reformers *within* the Establishment." But when Queen Elizabeth demanded in her arbitrary way that absolute uniformity of worship must be observed according to the rubric of the Established Church the *Non-conformists* refused compliance in respect to certain portions, considering them to be relics of Popery. They waited patiently for the coming of better days. Waiting in vain, they finally withdrew from the Mother Church. They went to the Bible for counsel, and discovered the two fundamental principles of their Congregationalism, viz.:

1. The several churches are altogether independent of one another.

2. Evidence of the requisite qualifications of church-membership is required by the church before admission to the Lord's Supper.

These Christians asked the State-Church of England the privilege of worshipping on these two principles; and it being denied them, they took refuge from their persecutions in Holland and in America. I need not repeat the oft-told tale of the Mayflower and Plymouth Rock. The Plymouth Colonists then endeavored to realize the old dream of Plato — to create a government of ideal perfection, which, he said, "could not come into being until kings are philosophers, or philosophers are kings." They founded their Spiritual Democracy. The Church was to be entirely independent of the dictation of the civil power; and the purity of the Church itself must be maintained

as a spiritual body. Upon both these points the "Pilgrim Fathers" were beyond the Massachusetts Bay Colony (chartered a few years after the settlement of Plymouth) from which Colony the settlers of Old Dunstable sprung. They were mostly Puritans; but in their organization of church and state, they departed somewhat from the Spiritual Democracy of Plymouth, and fell into the Theocratic system. Realizing that good government depended primarily on good and able men, and wishing also to preserve the Church order in which they so devoutly believed, they decreed by a vote of the First General Court "that, for the time to come, no persons shall be admitted to the Freedom of this body politic, but such as are *members of some of the churches* within the same." It was also made the duty of each town in the Province to "take due care from time to time to be constantly provided of an able and learned orthodox minister who should be suitably maintained by the inhabitants of the town."

Afterwards, when mere commercial adventurers joined the Colonies, laws were passed compelling attendance upon public worship, forbidding the formation of churches of diverse doctrine and government, punishing blasphemy, profaneness, Sabbath-breaking, and heresy, as crimes, — requiring that a "free-man," or voter in the town meeting, should be "of good personal character" and "Orthodox in the fundamentals of religion," and thereby restricting civil offices and privileges to members of the church. Any person to whom "Religion was as twelve and the world as thirteen" was reckoned as unworthy of citizenship in the Christian Commonwealth. Such a Church-State was in reality an Established Church. It was the principle of the English Establishment adapted to their new circumstances. *The Congregational Church was the Established Church of New England.* There was to be no Episcopal

hierarchy. They wanted a Church without a Bishop, a State without a King; but the State was to unfold within the Church. This union of Church and State was the fundamental error of the Colonists. While their deep religious spirit was the source of their virtues, their application of it to the civil government was the source of their errors and their faults. The theocratic system produced bigotry in the State and hypocrisy in the Church. But as time went on, this theory of Government was happily exploded. The church in convention declared that "it is not in the power of magistrates to compel their subjects to become church members, and, as it is unlawful for church officers to meddle with the sword of the magistrate, so it is unlawful for the magistrate to meddle with the work proper to church officers." The fires of the Revolution "which welded the Colonies together, consumed the dross of establishment, of patronage, and of theocracy, and left the pure gold of Religious liberty to be wrought into the National Constitution."

I have digressed into antecedent history in order that we may get out of our own age into the times in which our early church was organized, so that we may better comprehend their existing beliefs and their existing religious and political condition. In this way we can see that many outward things which were right and wrong to our fathers are not *our* right and wrong in similar matters; and that many of their laws and measures were not the outgrowth of their spirit or their faith, but sprung from the spirit of their age and the political necessities of the hour.

In accordance with the laws of the General Court concerning the providing of an "able and orthodox minister," Edward Tyng, Peter Bulkley, Elisha Hutchinson, and the other proprietors of the Township of Dunstable,



JOHN ELIOT

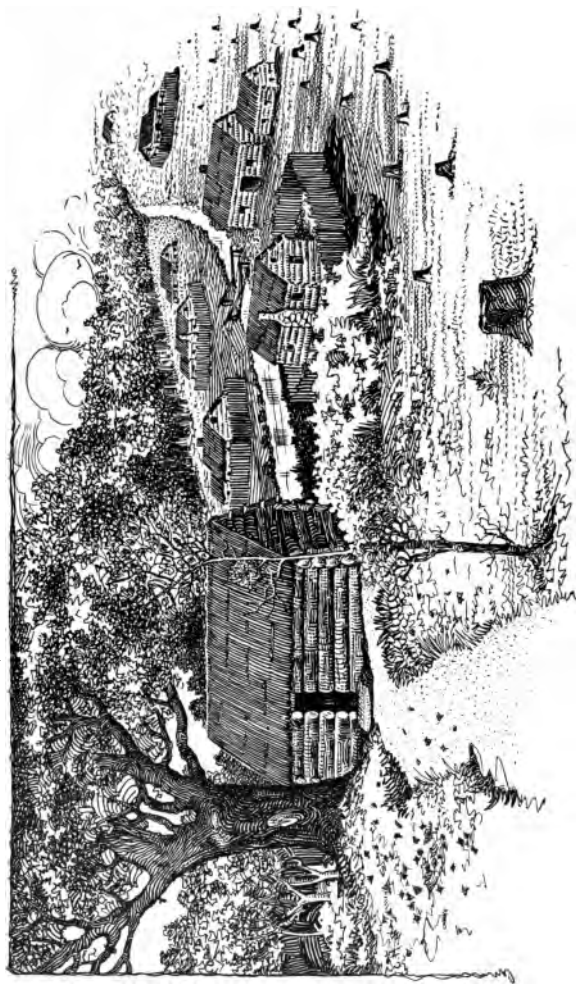
stipulated with the settlers of the town for the erection of a "meeting-house" and the support of a minister. At the very beginning of the settlement they erected the new social fabric on the two pillars of Religion and Liberty. A few months after the charter was granted, the proprietors met the settlers at Lieut. Joseph Wheeler's and drew up a written agreement. Among other conditions readily subscribed to, it was provided that "the meeting-house which is to be erected shall stand between Salmon Brook and the house of Lieut. Wheeler, as convenient as may be for the accommodation of both." During the next summer, in 1675, before the meeting-house was completed, occurred the outbreak of the dreadful conflict so well known in New England history by the name of King Philip's War. Dunstable had been one of the "six places" where the "praying Indians" held their religious meetings. Hither came Eliot, the noble and self-sacrificing Apostle of the Indians, who had vainly endeavored to convert the fierce, proud Philip to the Christian faith. The settlers of Dunstable were placed in such peril, from the active enmity of the hostile Indians and the suspected treachery of the Christian Indians, that by mid-winter not a family remained in the settlement, with one conspicuous and praiseworthy exception. The resolute Jonathan Tyng determined to fortify his house and defend it to the last extremity. On this account he may rightfully be considered as the earliest permanent settler of the old township. In August, 1676, the war was terminated by the death of King Philip. One by one the scattered families returned to their homes from their temporary residences in the larger towns whence they had fled as to cities of refuge. They found their cabins comparatively unmolested. A town meeting of the proprietors and settlers was held as soon as possible, in Woburn, in 1677: and it was agreed upon and voted "that, as soon

8 *First Church of Christ in Dunstable.*

as may be, a minister be settled in the town of Dunstable, — his pay to be in money or, if in other pay, the rate being to be made as money to add a third part more."

"It was also voted that the minister the first year shall have fifty pounds [equal to about \$300 now], and the over-plus of the farmes, are never to be abated." The Meeting-house, so hastily left unfinished, was completed in 1678. Are we to think, as we sit beneath this ample pavilion, adorned by the hand of taste, that, merely because 'tis spread on the soil of old Dunstable, we see the place as Jonathan Tyng and his fellow-settlers saw it? Do we suppose that the comfort and elegance of the churches in which we worshipped, this morning, suggest to us the first church ever erected in Nashua? Instead of "going to church" to-day at the First Church, and enjoying the cushioned seats, the carpeted aisles, the delicately frescoed walls, the softened light streaming through stained-glass windows, the brief discourse of half an hour, and the inspiring anthem from cultivated voices, or joining in the hymn to a tune adapted from some operatic air, though possibly all the better for that, — instead of going to church, I say, under these delightful circumstances, let us "go to meeting" this afternoon at the First Church, with Jonathan Tyng and his friends and neighbors. Do not forget your trusty fowling-piece; for you may hear the click of a gun-lock, from some thicket, that shall make your flesh creep with terror. These paved and well-trodden streets are obliterated. The elms and maples that adorn them in orderly regularity are straggling forest trees of oak and pine. These fair marks of trade are annihilated. Not a building interrupts the desolation of the broad, unfenced, white-pine forest of "Dunstable Plains" from the Nashua to Salmon Brook, nor will it for a hundred years to come. If you pick your way along the narrow path that we can






SKETCH OF FIRST MEETING-HOUSE, ETC., AS DESCRIBED IN DUNSTABLE-NASHUA.

barely call a road, you will do well to watch narrowly the falling leaves in the shadows of the wood; for what appears to be a leaf, which October has touched with her autumnal tints, may be the red feather of a stealthy savage lurking behind that rugged oak. A walk of an hour or less through the forest, with minds solemnized by the mournful sighing of the "melancholy pines," will bring us to Salmon Brook. We cross no iron rails; we see no warning flag of red, and hear no whistle's piercing scream; nor shall we for a century and a half to come; they are yet undreamed of. As you cross the rude bridge of logs, fail not to carefully notice that gleam of sunlight, which seems to be the reflection from the rippling water; for it may be the flash of a scalping-knife. The rapid current of the brook is unchecked by a mill-wheel, and ripples on against the rocks and amongst the hazel thickets that overhang its banks, till it gleefully leaps into the bosom of the Merrimack.

A few low cabins are ranged along the north and south sides of the brook. On the southerly side, half way between the brook and Lieut. Wheeler's, we come upon a log-house, about twenty feet square, with a low, thatched roof about ten feet from the ground, without a pane of glass, or a foot of lath and plaster to adorn the edifice, — and we find ourselves at the First Church, in the first village of Dunstable. We who go in families must not sit together on those backless seats of rough-hewn logs, placed on either side of the broad aisle. The grave wives and mothers and the grown-up daughters, in their sober attire, go to the left; while the fathers, not less grave, and the grown-up boys, file away to the right. Lovers and sweethearts find it hard to be separated for four mortal hours; and the small boys and girls, seated either in the aisle or on the "hind seats," so that they can be easily watched and reprimanded, find it harder yet to pass the dreary time, as they



vainly strive to bring their elastic faces into the proper stiffness suited to the solemnity of the place and the day. In the primitive pulpit stands a young man of twenty-six — Thomas Weld, the first minister of Dunstable. He is only seven years out of Harvard College, and not yet ordained; but he is already the leading man of the settlement, and one of the original proprietors. He was a classmate of Samuel Sewall, Chief Justice of the Colony. The Psalms that he "lines off" for our singing are from the "Translation of the Psalms into metre for the use of the Churches of New England," made by his grandfather, the Rev. Thos. Weld of Roxbury, one of the most eminent men of his day. He and his fellow translator were selected, not because they possessed any poetic genius, but because they were "most pious and godly men." On pain of excommunication let us not suffer a smile to wreath our faces as we sing the ludicrous lines. Like Gov. John Winthrop, young Thomas Weld "hath a gift at exhortation," and he easily holds his delighted hearers — the children excepted — through a four hours' service.

After sharpening their intellectual appetites, our worthy progenitors slowly make their way home, still with rifle in hand and a sharp lookout for an Indian, but absorbed in discussing, not stocks, nor railroad speculations, nor political operations, but the exciting and dividing questions of the day: "Whether a believer is more than a creature?" "Whether a man may be justified before he believes?" "Whether a man might not attain to any sanctification in gifts and graces, and have spiritual and continual communion with Jesus Christ, and yet be damned?" Scripture is at their tongues' end. Every thought and circumstance is pointed with an appropriate text. The conversation doubtless had, as Thomas Hutchinson said of an old Puritan's correspondence with his wife,

"too much religion in it for the taste of the present day." Not because there is less piety in our day, but because the methods of reasoning, and mental habits have undergone a change, as well as the nature of the topics of discussion and the customs of society.

For six years this rude building was used for religious purposes, but as yet no church organization was formed. In 1684 a new meeting-house was built, and the next year a church was legally organized, consisting of seven male members, viz.: Jonathan Tyng, John Cummings senior, John Blanchard, Cornelius Waldo, Samuel Warner, Samuel French, and Obadiah Perry who was killed by the Indians six years afterwards. John Blanchard and Cornelius Waldo were chosen deacons. On the same day that the church was organized Mr. Weld was ordained; and the 16th of December, 1685, marks the real birth-day of the church of Old Dunstable.

The church was the fifth in order of church organizations in New Hampshire — those at Portsmouth, Dover, Exeter, and Hampton having been formed nearly fifty years before, in 1638.

For twelve years after the charter of Dunstable was granted there had been preaching, but no church or organization. Mr. Weld had supplied the pulpit with considerable constancy, but without a legal settlement — war and poverty having prevented the organization up to 1685.

The salaries in the early times may seem to us to have been very small; but relatively to the times they afforded a very fair support. Mr. Weld was "passing rich with fifty pounds a year." In addition to his salary, he had the customary "*settlement*" which the town voted their ministers for nearly a hundred and fifty years. In these early times a town settled a minister for life, taking him

"for better, for worse;" and the "settlement" was the marriage dowry. The settlement varied as the circumstances of the town changed. Mr. Weld's "encouragement" to settle was six hundred acres of land, called "the ministerial lot." It was about five miles below the present City Hall, and the principal part of it was the farm known to us as John Little's.

To accommodate the growing wants of the inhabitants, a second meeting-house was built in 1683 "according to the dimensions of the meeting-house at Groton." It corresponded in size and convenience to the increased wealth and population of the place, and cost about four hundred dollars. To defray the expense, a tax was imposed of twenty shillings, or about \$3.00, upon every "thirty-acre right." It was in this house, and not in the original one, that Mr. Weld held services during his *settled* ministry. About four years previous to his ordination, he married a daughter of John Wilson, of Medfield, a son of the eminent first minister of Boston. After marriage his expenses naturally increased. Money was difficult to be obtained, and much of his salary came in the shape of "country pay" or produce. Mr. Weld appreciated the financial aspects of the times; for he was not willing to "accept of one-third advance from those that pay him in money as proposed, but accepts to have *double the sum of such as pay not in money.*" His residence in Dunstable, Mass., protected him from the pecuniary embarrassments of his four ministerial brethren in New Hampshire. Gov. Cranfield, the Royal Governor of the State, issued his decree against the Congregational clergy, ordering their "dues to be withheld," and threatening them with six months' imprisonment for not administering the sacraments according to the Church of England.

But hard times were coming to the faithful minister





REV. HARRIET WEED.

OF

ATTLEBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS.

ON EIGHT MARCH, MDCCLXXII, AETAT. LXII.

of Dunstable as well as to the settlers. The town was so frequently deserted, through fear of the Indians, that the support of the minister became very burdensome to the twenty-five families who remained. The General Court, however, came to their assistance for four successive years, granting them sums ranging from twelve to thirty pounds per annum. Various sums were granted during the history of the church succeeding Mr. Weld's ministry. To help their pastor bear his burdens during this trying period, every inhabitant was ordered to bring half a cord of wood to Mr. Weld by the first of November, 1697, or forfeit five shillings [50 cts.] for each neglect. This supply was in addition to his salary. Wood at this time was about a dollar a cord. The wood-rate was afterwards increased and assessed according to the ability of the inhabitants. By the depreciation of money, Mr. Weld's salary in 1699 was reduced to about fifty dollars. The wood-rate was consequently increased, and nineteen cords of wood were ordered for the minister. It is worthy of notice that Mr. Weld had to help pay his own salary; for he was assessed like any inhabitant both for the wood-rate and the minister-tax.

The fundamental principle of the equality of all men before God was rigorously observed. All titles were forbidden Mr. Weld. Even plain "Mr." was not allowed, either to clergyman or layman. The simple prefix of "Rev." was considered "an innovation of vanity." The austerity of our fathers was carried into minor matters. Dancing at weddings was forbidden. William Walker, one of the colonists, was imprisoned a month for courting a maid without the consent of her parents. Long hair or periwigs, and "superstitious ribands," to tie up and decorate the hair, were strongly prohibited. All ornament was "a vain show, and beauty a Delilah." Christmas

was a Popish day and not to be observed. To turn the back upon the public worship before it was finished and the blessing pronounced was "profaneness," and was prohibited by law. A "cage" was erected near the meeting-house for the confinement of all offenders against the Sabbath. One Sunday, John Atherton, a soldier in Col. Tyng's company, most scandalously profaned the day by wetting a piece of an old hat to put into his shoes, which chafed his feet on the march. He was fined forty shillings for his flagrant wickedness. Three months' intentional absence from the church brought the offender to the public whipping post. Even in Harvard College, students were whipped in the presence of Professors and fellow-students for grave offences committed in the chapel. The order of exercises for infliction of the penalty was first, prayer; second, the whipping; third, a closing prayer.

No Sabbath bell "knolled them to church." The plain, unsteeped, barn-like meeting-house never resounded to an organ or to a profane instrument of any kind. The windows of the humble edifice, neither large nor numerous, were guiltless of a pane of glass for fifteen years. Neatness and propriety reigned without and within. A widow lady kept the meeting-house clean and took care that no damage came to the glass. The tything-man kept his eye on the boys in the broad aisle and the "hind seats" that they might be "watched over according to law." Loose stones were cleared away outside the house. A new horse block was set up. All persons were forbidden to tie their horses to the meeting-house ladder. No "faithful dog could bear his master company" within the sacred precincts, and every dog was sore afraid of Samuel Goold, who was "chosen dog-whipper for the meeting-house." Amongst this "peculiar people," rigidly conforming to laws and customs like these, Thomas Weld spent the greater part of his life,



OLD BURYING GROUND IN DUNSTABLE-NASHUA.
Monument at the Right (distant from Gate) Marking Graves of
Pastors Weld and Prentice.

ministering faithfully to them in their homes and from the pulpit according to the Puritan idea of an able and Orthodox minister. He was in very truth as the "voice of one crying in the wilderness." On the 9th day of June, 1702, at the age of fifty years, the beloved pastor of Dunstable closed his ministry with his life. Accurate history discredits the tradition that he was killed by the Indians in an attack on his garrison. The record of his life is meagre and obscure. He was a native of Roxbury, Mass., and was born of a distinguished ancestry. He studied divinity with his uncle, Rev. Samuel Danforth, a celebrated minister; and came to Dunstable in 1678. Some years after the death of his first wife he married Hannah, the daughter of Hon. Edward Tyng, one of his fellow-citizens. Mrs. Weld survived her husband many years. The historian of the times says that he was a distinguished man, and esteemed for his fervent piety and exemplary life.

As we think of this first minister of ours, whose godly life and character was so interwoven with our history, and whose cultivated Christian intelligence did so much toward shaping the progress and securing the prosperity of the town, but whose name has been remanded to obscurity, with not even an inscription upon his gravestone, we associate his fate with that of the apostolic Robinson, the first minister of the exiled Puritans, to whose far-seeing wisdom we owe the inheritance of New England, but for whose mortal remains "the old world could not afford the allotment of a permanent grave."

A successor to Mr. Weld was not provided until 1720 — a period of eighteen years after the death of the first pastor, — but religious services were not suspended in the meantime, and several honest attempts were made to settle a minister. The vacancies occurred in distressful times, and the General Court granted generous sums for the sup-

16 *Unsettled Ministers and Their Support.*

port of preaching. The Rev. Samuel Hunt, a graduate of Harvard College, was the minister for about five years until he was ordered to a Chaplaincy in the expedition to Port Royal.

New Hampshire had been comparatively free from the wretched witchcraft delusion. Portsmouth had a few cases, but the panic was confined to that town. Had there been a witch in Dunstable, it would have been discovered; for the minister who succeeded Mr. Hunt was the Rev. Samuel Parris, who was previously settled at Salem, and in whose family the scenes of the tragedy commenced, and whose children originated the wicked acts which led to the death of so many innocent persons. Mr. Parris remained here four years. Public worship still continued through the aid given by the General Court. The last assistance was given in 1713. Peace was now restored, population increased, farms were extended, and the people were able to pay for their Sabbath service.

During the next seven years the town made three ineffectual attempts to settle a minister. Liberal offers were made to three graduates of Harvard, Rev. Messrs. Amos Cheever, John Pierpont, and Enoch Coffin. Mr. Cheever and Mr. Pierpont declined their calls. Mr. Coffin accepted the offer of a "settlement" of eighty pounds and ten acres of meadow land and two hundred acres of common land, with an annual salary of eighty pounds; but he was never ordained.

With so much uncertainty and indecision in ecclesiastical affairs during this long period, we do not wonder at the facetious remark of Col. Taylor to Gov. Burnet—who was a staunch Churchman and unaccustomed to the long graces at the tables of the Colonists,—and who, on his first journey from New York, to assume his Governorship of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, inquired of

Col. Taylor when the graces would shorten. The Colonel replied, "The graces will increase in length until you come to Boston; after that they will shorten until you come to your government in New Hampshire, when your Excellency will find no grace at all."

But the grace of preaching was restored to the town in 1720, when the Rev. Nathaniel Prentice was ordained as the second regular pastor of Dunstable. He, too, was a son of Harvard, of the class of 1714. The fathers learned wisdom from their experience with Mr. Coffin, and stipulated that Mr. Prentice should not "enter upon his salary" until after his ordination. Soon after, it was voted "that when Mr. Prentice comes to keep house and have a family and stands in need of a larger supply, then to add Reasonable Additions to his salary, if our abilities will afford it." Mr. Prentice soon after was married to Mary Tyng, a daughter of Judge William Tyng; and according to promise he was allowed "a large supply of wood," or ten pounds of passable money "in law thereof yearly."

About this time (1721) there was a universal scarcity of money; and the General Assembly of Massachusetts issued bills of credit to the amount of £50,000, "to be distributed among the several towns in proportion to the public taxes." This popular mode of making money induced the Assembly over six years afterward to issue £60,000 more. The share that fell to Dunstable was loaned to Rev. Mr. Prentice "to be applied in payment of his *future* salary as it shall become due." Money was plenty; and, as the old meeting-house had grown so old and out of repair as not to be "decent," it was voted that it would be unwise to "rectify" the old one, but that a new one should be built about four rods westward of where the meeting-house then stood. The house was not built, however, until 1738, after the death of Mr. Prentice.

The financial prosperity of the town brought a spirit of worldiness into the settlement. The families of the royal officers in the colony introduced extravagant fashions and styles of living from England. Religion began to be as twelve, and the world as thirteen. Puritan simplicity gradually assumed the airs of luxury and ambition. The little society in Dunstable was afflicted by it. It was voted that Lieut. Henry Farwell and Joseph Blanchard should have the liberty to erect for themselves two pews on their own charge at the west end of the meeting-house. It proved to be a dangerous precedent. The example was contagious, and within two months it was voted that "there be four pews erected in the meeting-house;" and Sergeant Colburn, Sergeant Perham, Nathaniel Cummings and Oliver Farwell each took up a pew and could now worship God and claim the favor of Heaven on an equality with Henry Farwell and John Blanchard.

Mr. Prentice was a very popular minister and remained with his people until his death. He was possessed of fine social qualities and excellent talent. An early historian says that he was "a man of wit and a good sermonizer." Not a little of his popularity was due to his wife. In that forest life she was the Diana of the region. Her engaging manners, activity, and courage were much admired by her parishioners; and their pride in their "minister's wife" was increased by the reputation she had made for herself beyond their own limited social circle. In what small esteem she held the conventionalities of life may be inferred from her fondness for gunning. Mary Prentice was a good shot. She was always present at a shooting-match. A fowling piece is still in possession of the Prentice family which she won at a target-shooting, where the gun was set up for a prize. The parson was present at the time and participated in the sport. We have no record that he ever wrote a work on "The Perfect Gun."

Mr. Prentice's life was not a long one. He died in 1737 at the early age of forty. In his will he bequeathed nearly all his property to Mary, his wife; "as I had of her six or seven hundred pounds which she let go to pay my debts, and the rest she spent in the family to keep us alive, I think I am in conscience bound to give her an equivalent." A worthy successor of Mr. Weld, he rests near his predecessor in the Old South burying ground, with no stone or inscription to mark his resting-place.

We now enter upon the second phase of the ecclesiastical history of Dunstable. The leading peculiarity of this period is the *spirit of disunion* which appeared to disturb the harmony and peace that had prevailed amidst all the vicissitudes of half a century.

The church had been without a pastor only two years after the death of Mr. Prentice when it welcomed to its pulpit with pardonable pride a baptized son of the church — Josiah Swan. He had grown up among them, and had been educated for the ministry at Cambridge. By his ordination in 1738, he became the third pastor of the church. Like both of his predecessors, he found his wife among the daughters of the church; yet unlike them, he did not find her among the Tyngs, but sought her among the Blanchards, — and Jane Blanchard became his wife the following year. The new minister began his ministry in the new meeting-house — which had been voted for, six years before, but had not been built until his agreement to settle. It stood near the old burying-ground not far from the State line, having been built for the accommodation of the original township. During the six years previous to Mr. Swan's ordination great municipal changes had been at work. The township was dismembered. One after another, new townships were set off from the original grant, and Hudson, Litchfield, Merrimack, Hollis, and Brookline, sprang into

existence as separate incorporations; until, by 1740, old Dunstable was reduced to the limits of what is now known as Nashua, Tyngsborough, and Dunstable, Mass. After violent struggles, which generally attend the separation of common interests, old Dunstable was severed nearly in the middle; and in 1741, Nashua of the present, with a large majority of the inhabitants, was set off to the upper Province, and was called Dunstable, New Hampshire.

The church was naturally affected by the animosities and controversies. A single church could no longer stretch its wings over so many districts, and the loss of many former members rendered it difficult to support a minister.

Another consequence of the division of the town was the necessity for a new meeting-house. The population was widely scattered. A diversity of interests prevented the selection of a location satisfactory to all parties; and the town finally voted, in June, 1746, to have the preaching in Ephraim Lund's barn. Jonathan Lovewell, a brother of the famous Capt. John Lovewell, of "Lovewell's Fight," proposed, in company with others, to build the meeting-house at their own expense, provided they could sell all the wall pews for their own benefit. After much warm discussion, the town accepted the proposal, and the church was built in 1747, a few rods north of the Old South Church.

Other causes of dissension had arisen within the church, which the present difficulties only helped to aggravate. Not long after Mr. Swan's settlement the quiet enjoyment of uniformity in faith, method, and practice, was invaded by an unusual religious excitement. The eloquence of Whitefield, who came into New Hampshire in 1744, affected the entire population of the State. So fascinated were the people that they forsook their ordinary occupations, laid aside their worldly schemes, and followed the wonderful preacher from place to place. The

professors at Cambridge, and many of the clergy, opposed and vilified him; but he bound the hearts of the people to himself with the most enthusiastic devotion.

Religion and theology, which for years had lost something of the old Puritan vividness in the minds of the colonists, now burned with increased ardor. They became the absorbing subjects of discussion. The churches were "infected with lay exhorters, who had undertaken to play the bishop in another man's diocese," as the regular clergy complained. New revelations and interpretations of Scripture were promulgated. The disputed points were discussed and decided in town-meetings.

One of the ablest advocates of the "New-Light" doctrines was Daniel Emerson, a famous skater and wrestler, who had recently become the first pastor in the new town of Hollis. Under the powerful preaching of Whitefield he forsook a wild life at Cambridge College and followed the great preacher from place to place. He received into his own strong, ardent and impulsive nature the influence of the mighty man of God. The disciple, in his turn, became a flaming New Light. He was a kind of Congregational Bishop in his region. No man in southern New Hampshire was so extensively known, and his influence was powerful on the surrounding ministers and churches. Mr. Swan's society did not escape the contagion, and a division followed. The pastor himself was a very prudent, thrifty man, but could not be called eminent for spirituality. His lack of sympathy with the zealous minister at Hollis, and with the New-Light doctrines in general, estranged from him many of his pious hearers who had embraced the new faith. The differences in the church, the township controversies, and the religious excitement of the times, all combined to render Mr. Swan's position a difficult one. With his temperament and training, he was

hardly equal to the exigencies of the hour; and failing to unite the opposing parties, he was dismissed.

Soon after his dismissal he returned to Lancaster, Mass., where he had taught school previous to his settlement in the ministry. He resumed his former occupation, and became an eminent teacher. Here he remained until 1760; and then removed to Walpole, N. H., where he died.

The dismissal of Mr. Swan did not allay the troubles, nor did the settlement of Mr. Bird (1747), who was an openly pronounced New Light. The choice was far from being satisfactory, and the division of sentiment was nearly equal. The New-Light party, headed by Jonathan Lovewell, built the new meeting-house according to the plan before described, and the church government was that of a one-man power.

Col. Blanchard, who led the opposition, refused to pay a minister whose doctrines openly subverted the faith of the Pilgrims. All who were dissatisfied with Mr. Bird were excused from the "minister-tax." The history of church dissensions now repeated itself and found a new illustration. Col. Blanchard and other orthodox members claimed to be the original church; and, separating themselves from the New Lights, resumed worship in the old meeting-house near the State line, — where they were joined by their former friends in Tyngsborough and Dunstable, Mass.

This new "Lovewell's Fight" was not confined to the battle-ground in the church. Here again history repeats itself. The contest concentrated itself into an intensely bitter party spirit, and pervaded the whole body politic. For a century after, the Blanchard party and the Lovewell party were pitted against each other in all matters of church and state. The petition of the Pine Hill resi-

dents to be set off to Hollis clearly reveals one phase of the hostility. "Each party," says the petition, "courted Pine Hill's assistance, promising to vote them off to Hollis as soon as the matter was settled. And so Pine Hill was fed with sugar plums for a number of years, till at length Dunstable cast off the mask and now appears in true colors. She wishes to keep us as a whip for one party to drive out every minister that comes there."

Soon after the secession it occurred to Blanchard that the town-meeting which called Mr. Bird was an illegal one; for, as yet, the Legislature of New Hampshire had not recognized Dunstable, N. H., as an incorporated town. Massachusetts had no jurisdiction over a town in New Hampshire; therefore the proceedings of the town-meeting held under a Massachusetts charter were null and void. The Legislature of New Hampshire sustained Blanchard; the transactions of that town-meeting were declared contrary to law. This decision led to the legal organization of the township under its New Hampshire charter, and a new town-meeting was called. The Blanchard star was now in the ascendancy. Mr. Bird did not enjoy his new religion in Dunstable, and migrated to a more congenial clime in New Haven, Conn.

When we look on these estranged party leaders, once such strong friends, and united by the common bond of perils past and jointly encountered and overcome, we sympathize with Coleridge's lines:

"Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother;
They parted — ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining;

They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between;
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

At this distance from the strife, it would relieve us to know if Joseph Blanchard and Jonathan Lovewell ever shook hands and mutually bade by-gones be by-gones, and agreed to "let the dead past bury its dead." We may at least hope that long ago they saw eye to eye on the peaceful plains of Heaven. That there was a little softening of the bitter feeling appears in the fact that the New-Light leader was appointed by the town to hire preaching. The new meeting-house formerly occupied by Mr. Bird, and then the only one in New Hampshire Dunstable, again sheltered both parties.

Six years afterwards, in 1753, the town voted to build a new meeting-house at the crotch of the roads near Jonathan Lovewell's. Lovewell's house was two miles below the present City Hall, and was known to many of us as Gibson's tavern. It is now owned by Alfred Godfrey, Esq.

The new meeting-house was partly composed of the materials of the old meeting-house near the state line, built during Mr. Swan's pastorate. The "Bird" meeting-house was bought by Jonathan Lovewell and converted into a dwelling house, whose ancient associations of Christian warfare are fitly perpetuated by its being the residence of our gallant Col. Bowers.

A second long period of twenty pastorless years now succeed the building of the new church. Preaching was not suspended; but the spirit of contention prevailed throughout, and there was only the form of godliness without its power. Earnest efforts were made to settle a minister.

Calls were made and accepted, but a nettling persistent minority would enter a protest and annul the entire proceedings. Benjamin Adams, Elias Smith, Josiah Cotton, Jonathan Livermore, Thomas Fessenden — all, sons of Harvard, and able ministers of the gospel — were successively called, and either declined settling in such a turbulent place, or were prevented from settlement by some member of the minority who had lived in Londonderry. The form of a protest entered at the call of Elias Smith has been preserved: —

“ We the subscribers * * * protest against the choice of Mr. Elias Smith for our minister * * * and for these reasons: *first*, because we are not of the persuasion he preaches and endeavors to maintain; we are Presbyterians and do adhere to the Westminster Confession of Faith; * * * we are members of the Presbyterian church in Londonderry — some, eighteen years — some, fifteen years, — and have partaken of Baptism and of the Lord’s Supper as frequently as we could * * * and we cannot in conscience join in calling or paying Mr. Smith. Therefore we plead the liberty of conscience that we may hear and pay where we can have the benefit.”

JOHN ALLD.

JEREMIAH COLBURN.

Another party was more pointed in its dissent. “ Mr. Smith’s preaching favors the Arminian scheme, which tends to pervert the truths of the gospel and darken the counsels of God.” In Mr. Cotton’s case the call was accepted, the day of ordination appointed, the churches invited to assist in the services, — when another Presbyterian protest was entered, and the church again learned that there was “ many a slip ’twixt the cup and the lip.”

Party feeling ran so high on this occasion that an Ecclesiastical Council was called to settle the difficulty. Mutual explanations followed, and a compromise was effected.

It would have given joy to us to-day if we could have known that the two party leaders had then buried the hatchet; but Joseph Blanchard died in 1758, before the reconciliation was effected.

To prevent theological differences in the future, a town meeting was called in 1761, to see what doctrines the town would support; and the "New England Confession of Faith" was adopted.

A brighter day was soon to dawn upon the church, although the cloud rolled but slowly and heavily away. The silver lining appeared in Mr. Joseph Kidder, a late graduate of Yale College. He was offered a settlement of \$450 and an annual salary of \$180. This excellent minister was ordained March 18, 1767. His long pastorate of over fifty-one years was not without trials. Party spirit, although slumbering, was occasionally roused into energetic life, both on old points of dispute, and on new ones occasioned by the exigencies of the times. The difficulties culminated in 1796. The case was referred to a committee mutually chosen by the parties, which decided to end the civil connection between Mr. Kidder and the town. He was consequently the last minister paid and settled by the town; and here ended the Dunstable theocracy. — (See explanation on p. viii of Introduction.)

Scarcely had the internal dissensions settled down to comparative quiet under the wise counsels of Mr. Kidder, when the town was excited by premonitions of trouble with the Mother-Country. The spirit of opposition, aroused by the Stamp Act and the tea-tax, together with the evident purpose of the British government to place the churches of America under the control of the Church

of England, culminated at last at Lexington and Bunker Hill. Town meetings were held in the church. The green in front of the meeting-house near Gibson's tavern was covered with excited Federalists discussing the events of the day and preparing for the contest. The people called upon the minister to search the Scriptures and declare to them the counsels of God; and we may be sure that Joseph Kidder responded with alacrity. Dr. Bouton of Concord relates an incident illustrating the patriotic spirit of the New Hampshire clergy during the Revolution. "One Sunday Col. Gordon Hutchins rode into Concord from Exeter, and, dismounting at the door of the church, entered in the midst of the service. The quick eye of Timothy Walker, the venerable pastor, caught sight of him; and, suddenly pausing, he called out, "Col. Hutchins, are you the bearer of any message?" "Yes! Gen. Burgoyne is on his march to Albany: Gen. Stark has offered to take command of New Hampshire men; and if all turn out, we can cut off his march." The old pastor instantly rejoined: "Those of you who are willing to go had better go at once." All the men in the meeting-house rose and went out. Many enlisted. The whole night was spent in preparation, and a company was ready to march the next day.

Beyond doubt, Capt. William Walker and the Dunstable company — which comprised one-half the able-bodied men of the town — accoutred for battle, marched to church before going to Charlestown, and listened to a patriotic farewell sermon from Joseph Kidder, and were fortified in spirit by his strong and fervent prayers for the success and prosperity of the American armies. The psalm would be one of David's war songs: the text, brave Joab's words, "Be of good courage, play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the Lord do that which seemeth him good": the sermon, adapted to the occasion

and full of the spirit of the day. The pastor's stammering tongue would be loosened in the freedom and energy of his utterance as he touched their finer feelings or roused them to the dreadful onset. Men, women and children would be melted at his pathos, and animated by his martial spirit as

“ He spoke of wrongs too long endured,
Of sacred rights to be secured;
Then from his patriot tongue of flame
The startling words for Freedom came;
The stirring sentences he spake,
Compelled the heart to glow or quake;
And, rising on his theme's broad wing,
And grasping in his nervous hand
The imaginary battle brand,
In face of death he dared to fling
Defiance to a tyrant king.”

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Fired with the spirit of their patriot parson, Capt. William Walker and the Dunstable company could go to battle like Cromwell and his Round-heads, “trusting in God and keeping their powder dry.” No! it is not in the statistics of the armies nor to the thrilling narratives of sieges and battles that we are to look for the true history of the Revolution. It is rather in the inspiration breathed into the souls of the people by the patriot ministers and the patriot orators of the Revolution. Ministers not only dared to preach politics in those troublous times; they were officially *asked* to do it. The church was the most appropriate place for the exposition of the religious principles involved in the struggle. If any timid loyalist objected that “God's house was the house of peace,” the patriot parson would reply:

"Nay, not so!
When God is with our righteous cause,
His holiest places then are ours;
His temples are our forts and towers
That frown upon the tyrant foe.
In this, the dawn of freedom's day,
There is a time to *fight* and pray."

The universal testimony of the students of the Revolutionary history, the general voice of the Fathers of the Republic and the spirit of our history unite in declaring that the superior numbers and skill of the British troops were compelled to yield to the material weakness of the American forces, through the *moral and religious energy* that inspired our Fathers. They were armed in the holy cause of Civil and Religious Liberty; and "to the pulpit, the Puritan pulpit, we owe the moral force which won our Independence."

It fills us with patriotic pride to know that *our* minister was one of the sources of moral inspiration at that day.

The records of the Hollis Association, traced by Mr. Kidder's own hand, show how vital was the interest among the associated clergymen in this region. The war was the all-absorbing topic. Ordinary discussions on disputed points were laid aside for graver matters of immediate public duty and interest. One of their number, Samuel Webster of Temple, was already in the army as Chaplain; and afterwards laid his life down in the service. It requires no stirring of the imagination to see these patriotic and godly ministers engaged in earnest counsel, and uniting in fervent prayer on bended knees, supplicating the Divine blessing and guidance.

After the church became an independent organization it still continued the services of the faithful pastor for more than thirty years longer, until his death in 1818.

Mr. Kidder was a fine representative of a gentleman of the old school. Many of our citizens remember the slight figure of the aged minister, always clothed in taste, and scrupulously neat and clean. His dress and manners were the visible expression of his mental habits. Precise, orderly, and punctilious, his generous nature expressed itself in manners courteously polite. His pre-eminently scriptural sermons were prepared with great care, but suffered in their delivery by an impediment in his speech. His house was half way between Amherst and Chelmsford, and was ever open with free-hearted hospitality to his friends in those places as they journeyed to and fro. It is not difficult to imagine this genial country-parson of the olden time, seated with his friends before the large open fireplace — filled with a sparkle-shooting hemlock fire roaring up the deep-throated chimney, — and detailing from his retentive memory interesting anecdotes, both grave and gay, lively and severe, in utterance which receives its choicest flavor from its hesitating accents. The picture instinctively recalls the genial gentleness of Charles Lamb in the midst of his chosen companions.

For many years he was the exact and punctual scribe of the Hollis Association of ministers. Whenever he was called upon for a sermon, the stuttering secretary recorded the fact in this modest way, "The scribe *attempted* to preach." Throughout his long life he was a constant and most intelligent student of the Bible. His marvelous memory was an encyclopedia of scriptural facts, genealogies, and anecdote. In his last days — when his memory was failing — though forgetting everything else, he could quote the Scriptures with all the appropriateness and accuracy of his early manhood. He was keenly alive to the importance of the routine of religious observances as an aid to the growth and vigor of spiritual life. He deeply realized

the importance of what are called the "little things" of life. A few small defects of character, suffered to go uncorrected, he expected to see developed, in time, into downright sins of omission. So careful was he to observe the golden rule and the rights of property, that he would not allow himself to take a berry from a field or an apple from the wayside, without obtaining permission from the proprietor. The strength of his religious habits appeared in bold relief during the closing days of life. His memory failed to retain the names and faces of his children and neighbors; but his Bible, his prayers, and his Saviour were never forgotten. Prayer was his last audible utterance. He was asking Heaven's blessing on his family, his colleague and his church, when the fatal stroke of palsy stilled his feeble stammering tongue forever to mortal ears.

The lessons of his declining years are full of meaning. He, being dead, yet speaketh to the generations that follow him of the importance of the early and habitual study of God's word, of the value of the *habits* of religion to the culture of the inner life, and of the perennial blessedness of the memory of the just.

Mr. Kidder's infirmities were such as necessitated his dismissal from the pastorate in 1796, and Mr. Ebenezer Sperry was ordained assistant pastor, Nov. 3, 1813. After a ministry of between five and six years Mr. Sperry was dismissed to assume the chaplaincy of the South Boston House of Correction. No record of his character or of his ministry is left to us. But his memory is to be held in grateful remembrance for the faithful care with which he collected and preserved the church records and for the interesting reminiscences of his senior pastor, Joseph Kidder.

The meeting-house, in which Mr. Kidder preached, is a good specimen of a house of worship in New England

a hundred years ago. Like many other churches it was a modified form of construction of the Old South Church in Boston, which has stood for the model of so many meeting-houses in New England.

"The house was very plain, about eighty by sixty feet in size, with a steep roof, without bell, belfry or cupola, and resembled in size and shape, except for the doors and windows, a fine large barn." It had large galleries. The two high pews (one at each extreme corner, to the right and left of the pulpit, in the galleries) were so much raised as to require stairs, to ascend and descend, and so high that a tall man could scarcely stand in the pew erect without touching his head to the wall above him.

The pulpit was built on the west side of the house and facing the large double front door, and had a huge sounding board hanging over it. Along the front of the pulpit, and between it and the communion table, was the deacons' seat, on which sat two worthies whose saintly dignity shone with added lustre and solemnity on the days of holy communion. The seat was a plain board hung with hinges on the railing of the seat, and when raised was supported by two curiously twisted iron braces.

A large, but single, door opened at each end of the house; and stairs led to the male side of the gallery at the extreme right corner of the minister, and corresponding stairs to the female side on the left. The broad uncarpeted aisle leading from the broad front door to the pulpit, in which stood our grandfathers and grandmothers when they entered into covenant with God and the church, was a solemn place. It received many tears of penitence — both from those joining the Church, and from those who had fallen into gross sins, and that stood there — while their public confessions were being read.

There was a narrow aisle leading quite round the

house, leaving one tier of pews joining the wall, and having inside two squares containing so-called "square pews." The latter had straight backs, with tops of open work and banisters — the latter, inserted some eight inches apart. The pew seats extended around on every side; except where there was a door, which was narrow and fastened with a wooden button. The occupants faced inwards; and some, therefore, would sit with their backs to the speaker. Hence the habit prevailed of standing a part of the time during the sermon, which at this primitive period was from one to two hours long.

The hour glass which stood on the pulpit was turned at the reading of the text; and the audience felt slighted, if the sermon ended before the sands were all dropped. How opposite this from the latter-day saints who complain of a sermon three-quarters of an hour long, and recommend to their pastor's consideration Whitefield's saying, "No souls saved after the first thirty minutes!"

The meeting-house was warmed chiefly by the sun; for a chimney, stove, or furnace was unknown in those days. A poor substitute was the foot-stove, which the matron of each family was careful in the coldest weather to have well filled with live coals from the home hearth-stone. The supply of coals was replenished, when needful, from the hospitable homes in the vicinity of the meeting-house. The long horse-sheds stood near by, — and also a horse-block, beside which many a two-horse wagon was driven, and hastily received its living freight of sturdy sons and laughing daughters while the horses were rearing and plunging till they were off in wind and in dust or sleet.

A committee was appointed to *dignify the meeting-house* — that is, to designate and arrange the seats according to their relation of dignity. The men and women were

seated separately on opposite sides of the house, and every one according to his office or his age or his rank in society. The children and young people, at the first seating, were left to find their own places, away from their parents, in that part of the house which was not occupied with seats prepared at the town's expense. The tything-man was appointed to watch them, and many an urchin was suddenly called to order by the tything-man's rap on the top of the seat.

The meeting-house and its surroundings was the "Holy Hill of Zion" to the Parish. "Hither the tribes went up" by different roads or lanes which centered there.

The parish was large, and every Sabbath day the people flocked in from the adjacent country and filled the house almost to overflowing. Going to meeting was looked forward to with great delight. The services of the day were not only enjoyed, but the social life of the town was concentrated at the meeting-house at intermission. "Every pleasant Sunday morning, hundreds came flocking into town—the elders on horseback with their wives on pillions behind, the hardy sons on half-broken colts, the daughters on fillies, now and then a household in a heavy farm wagon loaded with half a score—till the numerous families filled up the pews below and crowded the galleries above."

The history of sacred music in Nashua would afford an interesting field of inquiry. For many years one man had been employed to "set the Psalms," as the phrase went, for pitching the tune: sometimes two would be employed. The task of "lining off" the Psalm by the clergyman soon fell to the duty of some brother competent to give the office a becoming dignity. In the course of time, when the singing school was established, and learning to sing was like learning the Rule of Three, all those who

had "learned the rule of singing" were allowed to sit near together and had liberty to conduct that part of worship. The old inhabitants remember the long line of singers ranged around the front gallery who were led by the chorister opposite the pulpit. The sensitive temper which is thought to be the necessary state of feeling in a good singer has often produced unhappy results among choirs, and has frequently led to temporary troubles. The new way of singing Psalms, advocated by the ministers in the vicinity of Boston as early as 1726, was the occasion for no little controversy. Churches were divided for a time by the vexed question of the adoption of the new way of singing.

Occasionally a leader would be found who could play the violin, and he was appointed to stand where he could best guide the singers. The violin, at first a wicked innovation, was followed by the violoncello and the double bass viol. Gradually a flute was added, then a clarinet, and even a French horn when any one was found skillful enough to play one; and the old Jewish band of cornet and flute, sackbut and psalter, dulcimer and harp, was reinstated in modern church choirs. Although they have been superseded by an instrument more appropriate to the solemnity of worship, the brass band revival in very recent days, in at least one of our churches, shows that the spirit of the former music is still abroad. The instrumental music gave a new impulse to choir singing and singing schools; and the choir was eventually composed of all the singers that could be found in the congregation. With this union of social and instrumental music, the singing of the former days was fully as hearty and enjoyable as the trained quartettes of the present day. In due time the organ, once considered an attachment to Popery, "a chest full of whistles" or the Beast of the Apocalypse, began to breathe

36 *Noted Singers, — Respect for the Minister.*

out its churchly tones; musical taste was cultivated, ears became more sensitive, and one by one large choirs were dismembered and dispersed until the present mode throughout our churches is either the quartette and double quartette choirs, or else the more democratic mode of Congregational singing.

I would not willingly wound the feelings of any of our excellent singers by instituting comparisons; but, as citizens and lovers of the divine art of song, they will cheerfully allow me to speak of the days gone by when the celebrated musical artists whose voices have entranced thousands, whose fame is not limited to any region of the country, and whose gifts and graces will give the final charm to this festival season — they will permit me, I say — to recall the time when Hattie Bond, Ursula Greenwood, and Maria Eayrs, known to the public as Mrs. Long, Mrs. H. M. Smith, and Mrs. Kimball, were sweet singers in the Sabbath choirs of our Israel. Their fame is our pride and our boast. With the church choirs of other days we associate the names of Lyman Heath, Robert Moore, Abner Dodge, Edward Hosmer, Albin Beard, and others who have helped to give local renown at least to Nashua as the home of good singing.

The clergyman was treated with universal respect, particularly by the young. It was a wonderful sight to the rising generation in those days to see parson Kidder on his daily horseback ride. As he passed the schoolhouse the children ranged themselves in line, with uncovered heads, and made their manners to the good man, who, in turn, lifted his cocked hat and, with a pleasant smile, bade them a "cheerful good morning." When minister or stranger entered the schoolroom or the family apartment, the children arose at once to their feet. It has been remarked that "the family, the school, the church, society itself, were nurseries of decorum a hundred years ago." We

cannot revive these decorous customs if we would. We would not if we could, but we cannot but greet them as they pass in review before our memory.

“Hail ancient manners! sure defence,
When they survive, of wholesome laws.”

The meeting-house was not limited to religious services exclusively. The Puritan's idea of the State, unfolding within the church, so modified his reverence for “holy places” that he had no superstitious regard for the church structure itself. On a Sabbath day or Fast-day, his head was uncovered within the Temple; but he was careful also not to keep his hat on at any time in the sanctuary. Our fathers held that religion should be applied to all departments of life, and therefore the meeting-house was used for public assemblies of importance to the town. Town meetings were held in both the old churches for many years. The right of suffrage was regarded as a solemn thing, and whatever concerned the public weal was to be considered in a religious spirit. All town meetings were accordingly opened by prayer, and on very important occasions the minister preached an appropriate sermon.

A town meeting at the time of the Revolution is thus described by John Trumbull:

“High o'er the front on pulpit stairs,
Mid den of thieves in house of prayers,
Stood forth the constable; and bore
His staff like Mercury's wand of yore.
Above and near the hermetic staff,
The moderator's upper half.
In grandeur o'er the cushion bowed,
Like Sol half seen behind a cloud.
Beneath stood voters, of all colors —
Whigs, Tories, Orators and brawlers.”

The old house stood for about sixty years; and one morning in 1812 the people found it in the condition of the "One-hoss shay," "all in a heap" by the wayside. It had been pulled down in the night by a party who took this way to precipitate the construction of a new one.

The Old South Meeting-House, with its bell and tower and fresh white paint, was a great improvement on the one we have been describing. It was located about a half mile north of the former one; and was built by Willard Marshall and Joseph Lund on the same principle that Jonathan Lovewell built the meeting-house of 1749 — by hiring out the "pew-ground" to the people. The dedication sermon was preached, Nov. 4, 1812, by the Rev. Humphrey Moore of Milford; and is in possession of the Nashua Historical Society.

We have now arrived in the course of our history at the generation of the living. Memory takes the place of record and tradition. The third and last stage of our progress is reached, at which the broader signification of the Church appears in different church organizations with diverse and opposite faith and forms from the original ecclesiastical system we have been considering. It is with unmixed pleasure that we pass from the long and dreary period of *Disunion* to the period of *Union in the midst of variety*.

With the growth of the town, events multiply and incidents crowd upon us too fast to be adequately noticed on an occasion like this, which is more appropriately given to the chronicles of remoter times. There are later events, equally, if not more, worthy of commemoration. But of historic writing and the limits of human endurance on these uncomfortable seats, we may say that "Art is long, and time is fleeting"; and I will only crave your patience while I briefly sketch the different religious societies that



OLD OLIVE STREET CHURCH

have branched out from the trunk of our ecclesiastical tree. We are warranted in doing this; for the history of Dunstable does not really close until 1837, when the name of the town was changed to the more romantic one of Nashua.

In the interim between the dismissal of Mr. Sperry and the occupancy of the Olive St. Church, the religious condition of the town was gradually changed. People of all shades of belief worshipped together at the Old South. But many, who were influenced by the new religious opinions of the times, separated from the old church in a peaceful and noiseless manner and formed other societies. The Old South pulpit was occupied by various ministers.

Warren Burton, a well-known minister in his day, preached often on the precepts of the Unitarian faith. Rev. Andrew E. Thayer, a resident of Nashua, and from whom "Thayer's Court" took its name, is remembered with gratitude by many who listened to his spiritual teachings. The Nashua Manufacturing Company built the Olive Street Church for the accommodation of the operatives connected with the Corporation; and during its erection, many, who afterward formed the Unitarian and Universalist societies, worshipped in a room in No. 1 of the Nashua Company's Mills. When the Church was completed in 1825, it was first occupied by the liberal Christian society. Population was moving northward, and the majority lived north of the harbor between Salmon Brook and the Nashua River. The Old South became inconvenient for a greater part of the inhabitants; and in 1826 the old church of Dunstable bought the Olive St. house, which has, from that day to this, been the regular house of worship for one of the Congregational Societies.

To resume the story of the original stock. — After the

death of Mr. Kidder, and following the dismissal of Mr. Sperry in 1818, another period of destitution succeeded, that continued seven years. The church had been in existence up to the date 1820 — one hundred and forty years, — and during this time it had been without a regular pastor fifty-eight years, more than one-third of its life. The Rev. Handel G. Nott assumed the pastoral charge, Nov. 9, 1826. He commenced his ministry with the addition of fifty new members by letter and on profession of faith.

The year 1830 was a memorable one of growth to the church. Seventy-two persons united with it who had never before declared their personal allegiance to Christ. Mr. Nott's ministry was comparatively a brief one. Eight years covers the period; but up to this time it was the richest season of spiritual prosperity during the entire history of the church. Mr. Nott was a most indefatigable fisher of the souls of men out of the deep, and *three hundred and fifty-five* were added to the church in those few years. During the latter part of his ministry here Mr. Nott gave to the doctrine of infant baptism renewed and thoughtful attention; and in 1834 he announced to his people that he no longer regarded infant baptism as a divinely appointed ordinance; and, although he considered sprinkling as a valid mode of baptism and still adhered to open communion, he could not conscientiously administer the ordinance of baptism to the infant children of the church. Great surprise was expressed at this announcement; for he had publicly baptized his own child the previous Sabbath. So much dissatisfaction was expressed that an ecclesiastical council was called for advice. The unanimity of the council in recommending Mr. Nott's dismissal led to his formal resignation in October of the same year.

After his dismissal the society, as distinct from the church, invited Mr. Nott to supply the pulpit. The

"Old Chocolate," Built by First Church. 41

church, by a majority of one or two, decided to withdraw and worship in Greeley's Hall. The church officers were included among them, and a second ecclesiastical council declared that they constituted the original Congregational church of old Dunstable.

On New Year's day, 1835, the Rev. Jonathan McGee was installed as pastor of the First Church. During the year, the church edifice familiarly known as the "Old Chocolate," was erected at an expense of \$10,000. For seven years and a half, Mr. McGee ministered successfully to this people. He was dismissed at his own request June 8, 1842.

Eighty-five persons began the Christian life under Mr. McGee's preaching, and one hundred and eighty-six were added to the church by letter, making in all two hundred and seventy-one. The last year of his ministry was signally blessed by a revival which originated in the faithful efforts of a Sabbath-school teacher with his own class. The work of grace spread from class to class until the whole school was baptized by the Holy Spirit. The interest extended to members of the society not connected with the school, and many of them united with the church.

We may ask in the tender language of Scripture, "and the old man of whom we speak, is he yet alive?" Your own hearts answer; and we count it among the pleasures of this day that he is yet among us, the delight of his friends and an honor to his profession. We venture to say that among the memories of his long and useful life none stand out before him with a brighter radiance than those associated with that blessed season of 1842.

The ninth pastor of the church was the Rev. Matthew Hale Smith, who was ordained Oct. 17, 1842. By his energy and financial skill, a church debt of \$2,000 was liquidated; and, as if Providence designed to show the

intimate relation between sacrifices made for the material welfare of the church and its spiritual prosperity, another work of the Spirit began, which resulted in the addition of upwards of eighty to the church. On account of ill-health, Mr. Smith asked for a dismission; which was granted Aug. 20, 1845, after a ministry of nearly three years. For many years Mr. Smith's residence has been in the City of New York, where he is engaged in earnest, Christian labor; but he comes to Nashua almost daily in the character of "Burleigh," the entertaining New York correspondent of the *Boston Journal*.

The Rev. Samuel Lamson succeeded him in April, 1846. A dismission was most reluctantly voted Mr. Lamson at the close of his second year — he having resigned on account of feeble health, April 7, 1848.

He was followed in 1849 by the Rev. Daniel March, one of the ablest clergymen in the United States, not only a brilliant writer and effective speaker, but a most indefatigable and successful Christian worker. An important church in Brooklyn, N. Y., called him from Nashua in 1855. He has since been settled in Woburn, Mass., and in Philadelphia, where he now resides as the honored pastor of a Presbyterian church. The influence of his accomplished mind is still felt in Nashua and throughout the country, in his widely read works, "Night Scenes in the Bible," "Our Father's House," and "Home Life in the Bible."

The society then called a professor from Amherst College, the Rev. Geo. B. Jewett, who was both ordained and installed May 24, 1855. His pastorate commenced with every appearance of a bright and happy future for the church and for himself, but was terminated in less than a year by a most distressing accident at the railroad crossing near the Concord depot, by which his son, an only child, was instantly killed. In consequence of injuries



OLD CHOCOLATE CHURCH



sustained on that fatal 15th of April, Mrs. Jewett lost a hand and Mr. Jewett was crippled for life. With great sorrow the church dismissed the pastor to whom they had become most tenderly attached, on the 4th of August, 1856. Although the state of his health has not allowed him to take another pastoral charge, he still preaches occasionally; and from his home in Salem, Mass., he silently influences the literature of the country and of the churches, through his accurate and thorough scholarship.

The Rev. Chas. J. Hill, now of Ansonia, Conn., succeeded Mr. Jewett. His ministry commenced in 1857 and terminated in 1864. Another revival blessed the church at the commencement of his labors, and large accessions were made to its membership. Many young people were attracted to Mr. Hill's services, through his sympathy with the youthful.

Ill health compelled Mr. Hill to resign, and he was succeeded by Rev. Elias C. Hooker. His installation took place in September, 1865. He was a most zealous worker and an excellent preacher; but his feeble constitution would not admit of a long pastorate, and he was reluctantly dismissed in August, 1868.

The present incumbent of the pulpit, Rev. Frederick Alvord, was settled July 6, 1869. On the 15th of April, 1870, the "Old Chocolate" church was destroyed by fire. With praiseworthy energy the society erected on the same site their present elegant brick church, with its beautiful, convenient and unique interior arrangements,—and dedicated it, about thirteen months afterward, on the 18th of May, 1871.

The records of church membership up to 1790 are not to be found. Since that date 784 names appear on the church books; and the present membership is between 450 and 500. Among the names are found several who

are in the ministry, or in preparation for it. Rev. Mr. Dolt and Rev. Milton Bailey are from this church. Rev. John Abbott French is settled over the Presbyterian church in Morristown, N. J. Another is a professor in Andover Theological Seminary.*

Here ends the long and eventful history of the First Church of Dunstable and of Nashua. It is entwined with much that is noblest and best in the feelings of Christian citizens, and also with much that springs from the weakness of imperfect human nature. In spite of its lamentable short-comings and the undermining influences from within and without that have been brought to bear upon it, its inherent vitality has enabled it to endure the shock of disruption; and the Mother Church — to-day the largest society but one in the city, and among the foremost in the state — stands as the principal object in the background of our historical picture.

In recurring to the division of the old church of Dunstable, which took place during Mr. Nott's ministry, it is most gratifying to be assured by Dr. Austin Richards, the first pastor of the Olive St. Church, that both pastors of the two Congregational churches labored side by side in perfect harmony, and that the partial alienation and discord that had so unhappily rent the body of the church gradually gave place to a spirit of mutual forbearance and fraternal affection.

The change in Mr. Nott's doctrinal views was not the only reason that constrained many of the original church to remain where they were. A large number, though by no means all, of the friends of Mr. Nott sympathized with his views. All were strongly attached to their pastor; and none, without reluctance, could forsake the house of wor-

* This statement refers to Professor Churchill, who was received into the First Congregational Church by letter in 1860.

ship, with its added conveniences and improvements which they had helped to acquire by their earnest efforts and pecuniary sacrifices. So about half the members of the church and a large majority of the society decided to stay. Accordingly they formed a new organization, of which 41 — who were members of the old church — were legally dismissed to constitute the new. It is worthy of notice that Col. Thomas G. Banks, the efficient chief marshal of this Bi-Centennial celebration, is the only man living whose name is on the first records and membership of the society, forty-seven years ago. Mr. Nott preached for them a year, when he was dismissed in order that he might join the Baptist communion.

The church installed the Rev. Austin Richards, of Francestown, as their pastor, April 6, 1836, who continued his exceedingly useful ministry through a period of thirty years. At the close of the first year of his pastorate the church was blessed with a revival which resulted in 65 more members. In 1842 another great work of the Spirit was witnessed, and 115 new Christian hearts swelled the numbers of the church. Many of our most influential citizens date their spiritual life from that revival season. Ten years afterward there was another extensive and remarkable effusion of the Holy Spirit, and 101 united with the church — 80 at one communion. Many were from the Sabbath-school, and one of the devoted teachers who had been engaged in the Sunday-school work for thirty-five years declared it was during that winter that a great discovery was made. He had just found out that the true object of Sunday-school teaching was not simply Biblical instruction but the *Salvation of the Soul*. When this was *realized* whole classes gave their hearts' allegiance to the Redeemer. The history of Mr. Richards' ministry, with its three extensive revivals and constancy of religious

life in the church, closed Nov. 16, 1866, when he was dismissed at his own request. He was soon recalled to his former pastorate at Francetown. Failing health compelled him to relinquish all pastoral care; and he now resides in quiet retirement in Boston, surrounded with

“ That which should accompany old age,
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends.”

The Rev. Gustavus D. Pike was settled in 1862 as Dr. Richards' colleague. Resigning his position in 1865 he soon after accepted a secretaryship of the American Missionary Society. It is largely owing to his judicious management that Fiske University is so successfully accomplishing its objects.

The third pastor in the church was Rev. Hiram Mead, who was called from one in South Hadley, Mass., and installed Dec. 17, 1867. The church building was remodelled, and the parsonage and vestry built during his charge. His rare abilities were sought for by the Oberlin Theological Seminary; and in September, 1869, he resigned his pastorate to assume the Professorship of Sacred Rhetoric in that institution.

Dr. Mead's successor, the Rev. James S. Black — still holding the pastorate — was ordained and installed March 31, 1870, and is the bishop of 300 souls.

Olive St. Church takes a pardonable pride in the sons she has placed in the ministry, all of whom are honoring their mother church and the church of Christ in their respective fields of Christian effort.

Rev. Dr. Spalding of Newburyport, Mass., the Rev. Edward Clark — pastor of an up-town church in New York City, — and Rev. James Powell, late of Newburyport, Mass., are enrolled among the members of the Olive St. Church.

One fact full of meaning manifests itself in the history of the division of the First Church and Olive St. Church — a fact that stands out in bold contrast to the earlier disruptions of the old church of Dunstable. The causes of division originated in the pulpit and not in the pews. There was no taint of the selfishness of party spirit leading to the separation. An honest change in the opinions of a beloved pastor, involving great self-sacrifice on his part, resulted in an expression of loyalty to a good man on the one hand, and in an adherence to the great principle of liberty of conscience on the other. That such liberty is not incompatible with the work of the Holy Spirit is shown in the blessed seasons during the days of McGee and Richards immediately following the division; while spiritual torpor, almost amounting to deadness, marked the history of the dissensions of earlier days.

The Pearl St. Church was a child of Olive St. Church. The faithful preaching of Dr. Richards had so filled the Olive St. house that it became expedient to set off a colony of fifty-five members, to form another society.

The sympathy and co-operation of both the Congregational churches was cordially promised the new enterprise; and, on the 3d of September, 1846, the Pearl St. church was organized.

Until their new house of worship was completed, the society worshipped in the Town Hall and held their prayer meetings in the Olive St. vestry.

The Rev. Leonard Swain was their first pastor. He was ordained and installed June 24, 1847; and after a most pleasant and faithful term of service, he was dismissed in 1852 to take the pastorate of a new society in Providence, R. I. Here he remained until his death, which occurred, July 14, 1869.

In relating the history of the Pearl St. Church, I ven-

ture to advert to the name of its first pastor with more than a single word; for he is pre-eminently the ablest man who has yet appeared among the ministers of Nashua. For a period of eight years, from 1847 to 1855, and more particularly from 1849 to 1852, the Congregational pulpit of Nashua was honored and adorned by two of the foremost ministers in New England, Daniel March and Leonard Swain. Of the one, I have already spoken.

There are many of us to whom Dr. Swain, with his tall, spare, erect form, high, serene forehead, clear marble-like complexion, thin sensitive lips, deep sincere blue eyes, and solemn, impressive manners, seemed more like a being from another sphere — a direct link with the unseen world — than did any other man we ever beheld.

He seemed to be breathing the refined atmosphere

“ Where the immortal shapes
Of bright ærial spirits live inspher'd
In regions mild, of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call earth.”

No other preacher within our memory succeeded as he did in uttering the soundest evangelical thought with the stately manner of ancient orators. The leading qualities of his interior nature were his emotional and imaginative powers. To a stranger, simply looking upon his thin white face, and lips hard as marble in their repose, it seemed as if the fires of a passional nature could never dwell within so much ice. But those who were acquainted with his inner life as well as any one could know a man of so much natural reserve testify to his deep and tender feeling. It was his rich emotional nature, in combination with his sincere moral earnestness and brilliant imagination, that controlled, infused, and informed his powerful

speech. His deep-toned, silvery, resonant, majestic voice gave most solemnly penetrating emphasis, to his elaborate, though simple, language; and thrilled the soul with its physical properties merely. As it became the facile instrument of his strong feeling when profoundly stirred, it seemed like a Hebrew prophet's, echoing the voice of God. But when he took the hand of suffering, or spoke of the loving compassion of the Saviour, or responded to the changing moods of devotion, its trembling accents seemed to be full of tears.

Perhaps his emotional power, enhanced by a vivid imagination, was never more strikingly displayed than on the day of his graduation from the Theological Seminary at Andover in 1846. So diffident was he of his ability to do justice to himself and credit to the seminary that, up to the Saturday evening previous to the anniversary day, he had not written a word, and had pleaded urgently to be excused. His professor of rhetoric, unwilling that the day should be robbed of its brightest luminary, advised him to deliver the last half of a sermon that he had just criticised for him. The self-distrustful student reluctantly acted upon the suggestion; and one of the most eminent men of the day, himself a pulpit orator of foremost rank and a highly competent critic, affirms that the effect produced was simply wonderful. The audience was bathed in tears. Dr. Woods* was so agitated that he visibly trembled from uncontrollable feeling. Scholarly, unemotional men, who sat on the platform from which he spoke, sobbed aloud; the very stage shook beneath them from the force of their emotion. That anniversary address stands out from among all others of its class during the

* Dr. Leonard Woods — formerly professor of Christian Theology, and then professor emeritus at Andover Seminary — undoubtedly is the person here meant.

history of that venerable seminary as a conspicuously solitary exception.

The character of his preaching was direct, simple, and thoroughly evangelical. It seemed to his people at times that he dwelt too long in the bracing atmosphere of Sinai, and not long enough in the milder air of Calvary. The two master ideas which possessed his mind were God's glory and man's salvation. One of his parishioners in Providence who knew him intimately says "that he was not so anxious about the spiritual condition of individual Christians as about the state of the impenitent as individuals. For his people he was apparently less solicitous about growth in grace than about conversion. Sanctification was important but justification was vital." He loved souls too well, it would seem, to speak words of a false peace; he waited until they had declared a *complete* allegiance to the Saviour.

He had a clear vision of unseen things. Spiritual verities were to him realities. He had the spiritual mind that discerned spiritual things. With pertinent emphasis a friend says that, in his long life of suffering, he "endured as *seeing* Him who is invisible." Spirituality was the predominant feature of his Christian character.

Nature had not formed Dr. Swain for many friendships; but those who were admitted to the sanctuary of his affections never knew a friend more tender, true, and steadfast. Another friend speaks of "his genial sayings, tinted with the delicate hues of fancy, edged with the keenest wit, or bubbling over with genuine humor." Dr. Swain had in him the original stuff for a martyr. He never hesitated an instant between policy and principle. He gravitated towards principle as surely and as naturally as the needle to the pole. And yet he was always courteous, candid, and just to an opponent. He took positive

ground on all important social and political matters; and the poor and the outcast found in him a friend and a defender. He pleaded for the rights of black children in the common schools, and declared that until they enjoyed their rights he would take his own children away from the schools and place them under private tuition. His voice rang like a trumpet during the Great Rebellion, and he called upon men to "fight as Christians and because they were Christians."

He frequently disappointed those who went to hear a "great sermon" from him; and he always appeared to better advantage in the conference room and the familiar lecture. His literary standard was so high, his critical sense so keen, his culture so varied, and his nature so modest, that he undervalued his sermons, and never allowed but one or two to be printed, and solemnly enjoined that none should be published after his death. This morbid sensitiveness was his weakness and our calamity. The printed sermon of striking eloquence and beauty on "God's ownership of the sea" suggests to the world what it has lost; but this masterpiece will take its place among American classics. He read Dante in the original Italian, and knew French and German. Two rich specimens of German hymnology were translated by him for the Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book. He had the mental constitution of a poet, and had written a manuscript volume of poems which was committed to the flames. I have read a poetical letter, written when he was in his twenty-third year, to his brother George, that, notwithstanding its haste and familiarity, is full of airy fancies, exquisite feeling and delicate turns of thought and expression. No one but a "born poet" could have written it. He is also the author of one of the choicest hymns in the Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book.

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Let his friends speak for him again:—Many of his former people who hear this brief memoir to-day will appreciate what is said of the “regal mastery of his speech as associated with his *prayers*, so unlike the prayers of other men. The heart that could hear his prayers, unmoved, must be as the nether millstone. He had a remarkable faculty of summing up the items of thought and petition, presenting them in prayer clearly, pertinently, fervently and devoutly. In this particular, he far excelled any other man I ever knew. The thought, the tone, the expression, the whole outgoing of the man was prayerful. He was emphatically a *leader* in prayer. You could follow him so easily in his spiritual thought and gracious speech that it seemed to be as much *your* prayer as his.” But though we have no sermons to perpetuate his memory, his work and his life shall be his best memorials. This church, of which he was the first pastor, and which he built up and made strong with five years of his noble life, is here his fitting and enduring monument.

The second pastor was Rev. Dr. Ezra E. Adams, of Philadelphia. This genial man, able preacher, and faithful pastor, began his work here Aug. 31, 1853, and ended it July 13, 1857.

His four years' ministry was succeeded by the still briefer pastorate of two years of the Rev. E. W. Greeley, at present settled over the church in Haverhill, N. H. He was installed over this church Feb. 24, 1858, and was dismissed, at his own request, May 17, 1860.

Rev. B. F. Parsons was with the Pearl St. Church nearly six years, from Nov. 7, 1861, to June 18, 1867. His residence is now in Derry, N. H.

The fifth pastor, Rev. Wm. L. Gaylord, was called from the church in Fitzwilliam, and was installed Dec. 31, 1867. He closed his ministry three years later, — Oct. 27,

1870, — and went to Meriden, Conn. (where he now resides), to become the successor of Rev. W. H. H. Murray, who had gone to the Park St. Church in Boston.

The Rev. Charles Wetherby, the present pastor, was settled, Dec. 7, 1871.

Five hundred and forty-three names have been placed upon the membership records of the Pearl St. Church since its organization twenty-seven years ago. Among them are the names of six men who have become able ministers of the gospel. The Rev. S. M. Freeland, at one time a popular principal of the Nashua High School, is in Detroit, Mich. Rev. Richard C. Stanley, a principal of our High School, is professor of natural science in Bates College, Lewiston, Me. Rev. C. A. Leach is pastor of the Congregational church in Keene, N. H. Rev. E. L. Whitcomb is an Episcopal clergyman in North Haven, Conn. Rev. Henry M. Tenney is settled in Winona, Minn. Rev. Josiah E. Kittredge is the pastor of the Congregational church, Glastonbury, Conn.

The present membership of this church is 203, and the Sabbath-school of 250 members is in a very flourishing condition.

The history of the Olive Street and Pearl Street Societies affords another illustration of the unfolding of God's wonder-working Providence. Who amongst us to-day, of those living at the time of the division in the church forty-seven years ago, could have predicted that he would see what he now sees? Out of a division so full of regretful causes, have sprung two large and influential societies which are among the leading moral and spiritual forces in the city. And the old First Church itself from which they derived their original life is stronger to-day than either.

This was not designed nor anticipated at the time of

the disruption; but there was an Eye that did see it, and the Mighty Head of the church so directed the dissension that He finally made the wrath of man to praise him.

Passing now from the natural branches in their organic development, we come to the branches that have been grafted into our ecclesiastical tree. We return to the time of Kidder and Sperry in 1818. For nearly a century and a half the old ideas and institutions of the primitive faith of New England had prevailed in Dunstable. As I have before remarked, the Congregational church, in a certain sense, was the *established church* of New England; indeed it may rightly be called so to-day. For a hundred and fifty years no one in Dunstable ever thought of being anything else than a Congregationalist. He might be Orthodox or New Light, but he was a Congregationalist still. Whitefield was a Methodist, it is true; but he was a Calvinistic Methodist, and did not concern himself with the forms of church government. He simply sought to infuse the spirit of the living Christ into the *existing* forms. There had been petty dissensions in the church itself, but no schismatics had gone out from the old church to form other churches maintaining peculiar and contrary views.

As time passed on, and the population increased, and new attractions drew strangers into town, it was to be expected that adherents to other forms of faith and practice would be found scattered here and there in the growing village.

The doctrine of universal salvation, so radically opposed to one of the leading doctrines of the Evangelical faith, was introduced into the country during the eighteenth century by the famous John Murray. His liberal teachings had been promulgated in New Hampshire in a few localities as early as 1781. In that year a Universalist





OLD SOUTH BURYING GROUND — NOW CALLED EVERGREEN CEMETERY.

church was formed in Portsmouth. The bold and able advocacy of the fascinating doctrine resulted in the organization of the first Universalist society in Nashua, Jan. 27, 1818, which became the first to encroach upon the domain of the original ecclesiastics of the village. Twenty-eight members constituted the society. Only two of them are now living, Gen. Israel Hunt and Hon. John M. Hunt. Their father was the leading mover in the new enterprise. The Universalists in both the Dunstables united in the services which were held in either place as convenience dictated. The leading Universalist divines — Hosea Ballou, Thomas Whittemore, Paul Dean, and Otis Skinner — preached for them in schoolhouses and barns. Gen. Hunt more than once spent some of his youthful strength in tearing off the boards from some schoolhouse which had been nailed up against the "heretics." The following year it seemed best to concentrate the society in Dunstable, N. H., and a new constitution was adopted Feb. 20, 1819, Israel Hunt, Jr., being chosen clerk. The new society started with forty members, and with the Rev. Charles Hudson as pastor. Mr. Hudson afterwards became a member of Congress, and is now living in Lexington, Mass. The society was merged in course of time into the congregation worshipping in the Olive St. Church prior to its occupancy by the orthodox.

It was not until 1833 that the society, as a distinct body, was reorganized. The Old South Church, whose walls had echoed to the warning notes of Calvinism, then became the shelter of the Universalists. The first pastor, Rev. William M. Fernald, proclaimed from the pulpit of Kidder and Sperry the liberal doctrines of John Murray and Hosea Ballou. For two years the society worshipped in the Old South, under the pastoral care of Rev. A. P. Cleverly, until the new church was dedicated in October

56 *Universalist Pastors and Their Work.*

of 1839, when Rev. L. C. Browne became pastor. Mr. Browne had been settled six years, when his health failed him, and he was dismissed. Rev. Dr. Wm. H. Ryder, now of Chicago, was his successor. In two years, Mr. Browne was re-installed; remained until 1853. It was in this year that he published his reply to Matthew Hale Smith, a former pastor of the First Congregational Church, who had written a book assailing the doctrines of the Universalists.

Mr. Browne's successor was Rev. Dr. Charles H. Fay, now of Washington, D. C. For two years Mr. Fay guided his people with great wisdom and ability. His public spirit won for him the esteem of his fellow citizens, and both church and community parted with Mr. Fay with genuine regret.

Rev. O. D. Miller, the next pastor, remained four years as minister, but continued to reside in the city after his resignation.

In 1860, the eighth pastor, Rev. J. O. Skinner, began his ministry of two years' continuance.

Thomas L. Gorman, the present acting pastor of the Unitarian society, succeeded Mr. Skinner, and preached here two years.

The Rev. Dr. G. T. Flanders, late of Chicago, now of Lowell, was pastor for four years, and was followed by the highly esteemed Rev. S. H. McCollister. The church and the community lost a most excellent man and Buchtel College gained an efficient President, when Mr. McCollister left the church in 1872. The present pastor, Rev. H. A. Philbrook, has been with the society since the beginning of the year 1885.

The pride and glory of the church is its flourishing Sunday-school, established in 1836 by C. P. Danforth, Esq., who continued to act as superintendent some ten or twelve

years. His successors were Geo. E. Burke, E. P. Hill and Hon. Wm. T. Parker — who served in that capacity some eight or ten years — Hon. F. S. Rogers, J. M. Fletcher, C. W. Murch, Jonathan Parkhurst, Francis Hill, W. H. Chase, Edward Parker, and C. M. Langley. This Sunday-school claims the honor of inaugurating the Sunday-school "concert" in Nashua.

The Rev. Mr. Whitney, of the Universalist church of Beverly, a Nashua boy, was once a member of this school. Another member of the school is preparing for the ministry of the Universalist church, at Buchtel College, under the guidance of his former pastor, Rev. S. H. McCollister.

In 1818 the Baptists formed a society. They had heretofore worshipped with the Old South Society; but they sought for the maintenance of a work more strictly calvinistic in doctrine than they found amongst so much New-Light leaven. They felt the need of a more rigorous discipline and a greater purity in the internal relations of the church.

The method adopted to carry out their convictions was the formation of a church which should pay conscientious attention to the ritual suggested by the literal language of scripture, especially in the rite of baptism. A separate religious community was accordingly formed, known as the First Baptist Society of Dunstable.

In early colonial days corporal punishment was inflicted on any person who should hold religious meetings otherwise than as the laws allowed, or who should speak against pedit-baptist principles. These laws were prosecuted with no little severity; in a word, the public sentiment of the ruling Theocracy was opposed to all intruding sects.

In spite of opposition and prosecution, Baptist prin-

ciples gradually spread over the province of New Hampshire. The town of Newton was the first to foster a Baptist church; this was in 1755. From 1770 Baptist church extension rapidly gained ground, and it is somewhat surprising that no church of that denomination was formed in Dunstable at an earlier date.

Itinerant Baptist preachers occasionally spoke in the old church in the south part of the town. One day, while a travelling minister was holding service in the church, a white dove entered a window and alighting upon his shoulder, turned around, and faced the audience. In a few moments the bird flew away. The preacher and his hearers were greatly impressed by the beautiful emblem of the descent of the Holy Spirit; and the preacher, moved by the suggestiveness of the scene, exclaimed with prophetic utterance, "The Lord hath this day kindled a fire in this place that will never be extinguished."

Although the society was formed in 1818, the church was not organized until 1822. Of the original twenty-three who signed the constitution of the society in 1818 but one is now living. John Butterfield yet lives to rejoice in the rich prosperity of the church of his early love and prayers, and in his connection with a denomination that is second to but one in point of numbers in the United States.

The beginnings of the church were feeble. For some time, it included but six men and nine women. The old school-house which stood between Concord and Manchester streets, on the south side of Rural Street,* was the

* Rural Street was afterwards named Mt. Pleasant Street — it being in a line running eastward from that part of Mt. Pleasant Street which extends from Abbott Street to Manchester Street. The old school-house lot was sold to Gen. George Stark; and the school-house was moved to a lot directly opposite on the north side of Rural (now Mt. Pleasant) Street, where it serves as a double dwelling-house.

cradle of the infant church. Mr. Butterfield was one of the six men who worshipped there; but he has now the honor of being one of 1,671 members of this church who have sat with him at communion since 1822.

The Old South Meeting-House soon became their house of worship, the Congregationalist Society having removed to the Olive St. Church. Rev. Bartlett Pease occupied the pulpit from May, 1828, until July, 1829. On the 25th of February, 1830, their first pastor, Rev. Caleb Shute, was ordained, but was dismissed Dec. 18 of the same year. For three years they were without a settled pastor, but were supplied by nine different preachers, holding their meetings, now in the school-house, and now in the Old South, as convenience dictated. A successful call to Rev. Dura D. Pratt secured to them the services of a minister who devoted himself to their interests with unsparing fidelity and eminent ability until his death. He was ordained Jan. 23, 1833, and the new meeting-house was dedicated the same day. His greatly lamented decease occurred Nov. 13, 1855, after a pastorate of twenty-two years. This was Mr. Pratt's only pastoral charge. His friends sententiously say, "We ordained him; we buried him."

The first meeting-house built by the Baptist society was on the site of the one they now occupy. It was destroyed by fire in 1848. The present commodious brick edifice was dedicated as a New Year's gift to the head of the church, Jan. 1, 1850.

Mr. Pratt left to his successor, Rev. W. H. Eaton, a vigorous and active church of over 500 members, and a Sabbath-school of 350 pupils. Mr. Eaton was installed Jan. 26, 1856, and for fourteen years he performed his duties with marked ability; nor was his interest confined to his own church. Firm and unyielding in his personal

convictions, he never withheld sympathy or co-operation from any plan for the public good which seemed to him to be for the general welfare. Mr. Eaton's executive ability and financial wisdom was sought for by the Baptist Educational Institution at New London; and he resigned his charge to assist the struggling academy. Only six months elapsed before the society was again under his pastoral care.* His present residence is in Keene.

Rev. H. H. Rhees was installed July 15, 1870; and was dismissed to the Baptist Church at Southbridge, Mass., Dec. 31, 1872.

On the first of May of the present year (1885) Rev. G. W. Nicholson, was installed. He has the care of 517 souls, the largest Protestant parish in the city.

A second Baptist church was formed in 1836 by the Rev. N. W. Smith. A meeting-house was erected for it on Chestnut Street, which is now occupied by the Chestnut Street Methodist Society. The new church consisted of 20 or 30 members who peaceably separated from the old, for more convenient worship. Rev. Mr. Pratt preached the dedicatory sermon from the very appropriate words, "I am not worthy of the host of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast showed thy servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan and now I become two bands." The financial embarrassments of 1837 to 1838 so affected the new enterprise, that the society returned to the old church, and abandoned their late organization.

The year 1830 brought with it some irritation to these staunch defenders of John Calvin's theology and high Baptist principles. Free salvation and open communion were proclaimed by Elder Silas Curtis. This earnest Free-Will Baptist preacher remained until 1839. The "Free-Willers" had brief pastorates. Four pastors—

* In 1867 he received the degree of D.D. from Brown University.



› FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, MAIN STREET, CHIEF ENTRANCE ON FRANKLIN STREET.

Curtis, Preble, Phelon, and Stearns — were distributed over a space of five years. The little society of 40 worshipped in the building at the west corner of Orange and Canal streets, now (1885) occupied by Spalding & Stearns, as a storehouse for grain.

Another form of Baptist heresy appeared in 1840. The *Christians* — Unitarian in doctrine, but Baptists in ritual — formed a society under the charge of Rev. Mr. Robinson. There was never life enough to secure an organization, and the enterprise died a natural death.

In the early part of this century, one of the most important controversies that ever engaged the interest of thinking men shook the religious world in New England from centre to circumference. It was a contest for the intellectual freedom of the church. The successive modifications of opinion, which had been going on during the latter part of the last century, finally developed into Unitarianism, or Liberal Christianity. The abolition of all engagements which may fetter the free teaching of the clergy was the leading idea of the movement.

So close was the proximity of Dunstable to Massachusetts — and especially to Boston, the principal field of combat — that it would have been strange if the religious atmosphere of Dunstable were not affected by the smoke of the battle. A small number of the most intelligent and thoughtful citizens deeply sympathized with the new doctrines. On the 11th of September, 1826, a church was duly formed under the name of the First Unitarian Congregational Society in Dunstable.

The Nashua Manufacturing Company had built a church on Olive Street, and the first services of the new society were held in this building. They occupied the Olive St. Church until their new church was finished, Jan. 27, 1827. Suggestive of the brighter day dawning on

the religious world, the corner stone of "Greenwood Church" was laid, "upon a pleasant spring morning," at sunrise. The dedication of the church was on the day of the ordination of its first pastor, Rev. Nathaniel Gage. Mr. Gage was an earnest preacher, and his old friends affirm that the vigorous and healthy tone of his sermons was the natural expression of a healthy nature that could do valiant service with the scythe and plow. He remained with the society seven years, and was dismissed, at his own request, in 1834.

Mr. Emmons, whose name indicated anything but a liberal theology, was ordained and installed the following year. Delicate health compelled him to resign in 1837. He was followed by the most eminent of the clergymen who have been connected with this society, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Osgood, then a young man just out of his divinity studies. The youthful pastor was ordained and installed May 16, 1839. He made the pulpit a living force in the community. He was a "broad churchman" from the outset. Holding to no exclusive service, he worked for society at large. His ideas and methods of church life were heartily entered into by his people, and his pastorate was rich in fruitful results. The beautiful custom of recognizing Christmas, as a Christian festival, in the decoration of the church with evergreens, originated in Nashua with Mr. Osgood. He was sought by the Unitarian Society in Providence, R. I., which received him from this church in 1841. The church of the Messiah in New York called him from Providence in 1849. After a ministry of about twenty years in New York his theological opinions, which had gradually been changing, led him to embrace the faith and practice of the Episcopal Church; and for nearly three years he has been an Episcopal rector in Brooklyn, N. Y. Dr. Osgood has always been active

in literary and educational interests, and he has published works of considerable excellence. "Studies in Christian Biography," "The Hearth-Stone," "God with Men," "Student Life," and "Milestones on Our Life's Journey" are among the books he has written. He has also made admirable translations from the German. The pages of the *North American Review*, the *Christian Examiner*, and *Bibliotheca Sacra* have often been enriched and adorned by his fertile and elegant pen.

For two years the church was without a pastor. Then the Rev. A. C. L. Arnold was settled about ten months. Next, the church welcomed the Rev. Samuel G. Bulfinch — an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile, — who ministered to it most acceptably for seven years, beginning Sept. 17, 1845. The memory of his gentle ways and spiritual teachings is still precious to many whose eyes he opened to discern things unseen and eternal.

As an author he took no mean rank. His "Evidences of Christianity" is one of the most satisfactory books of its class; and the novel entitled "Honor," although not widely read, is a beautiful setting of many choice gems of sentiment and expression. He was always a welcome contributor to religious periodicals. Mr. Bulfinch died in 1872.

Rev. Martin W. Willis was settled here in January, 1854, after an interval of two years. His useful pastorate of seven years closed in the autumn of 1861.

The next pastor was Rev. Samuel B. Stewart. He remained for nearly two years, and resigned his ministry on the first of January, 1865.

A year from the next March, Minot G. Gage, a son of the first pastor of the church, was ordained and settled over the society. He was dismissed on Dec. 18, 1869, to take charge of the Unitarian church in Gloucester.

The Rev. Clarence Fowler succeeded him in December,

1870. A brief ministry of a year and a half completed his work in Nashua.

The Rev. Thomas L. Gorman, formerly pastor of the Universalist Church in Nashua, has been the acting pastor since Jan. 1, 1873.

The Sabbath-school has been one of the leading and most pleasant features of this society from its formation. Its library contains over 800 volumes. The late lamented Dea. John A. Baldwin was its superintendent for thirty-seven years. He was succeeded by Mr. James L. Pierce, who was superintendent for twelve years. On the first of June, last, he resigned the office to the present superintendent, Dr. E. F. McQuesten.

There are scores of men and women, scattered over the Union, who will ever recall with tender and grateful memories the hours spent in this Sabbath-school, receiving religious instruction and hallowing impressions from self-sacrificing teachers, many of whom have passed the solemn veil and penetrated the Great Secret.

Following the history of our churches in chronological order, we come next to that thriving branch which is a part of the largest denomination in the country. The rise and progress of Methodism in America has been nothing less than marvelous. Previous to the visit of John Wesley to America in 1735, there was not a Methodist on the American continent. By this time the other leading evangelical denominations had established a firm footing in the New World. But notwithstanding their advantage of a century's start and a century's growth Methodism has outstripped them all, and multiplied its numbers so rapidly that they are like the sands on the seashore. To-day they are not only the leading denomination, but they compose nearly one-half the entire number of the Protestant communicants in the United States.

Rise of Methodism in Dunstable-Nashua. 65

Methodism did not strike its roots in Dunstable until thirty-five years after the first Methodist society was formed in New Hampshire at Chesterfield. A handful of Methodists had come into Dunstable about 1831, and were employed in a woolen mill at Indian Head. The faithful few determined to found a Methodist society, and began to hold weekly meetings. The other denominations looked a little askance on the ardent religionists, whom they were inclined to regard as crazy fanatics, if we may credit a chronicler of the times. The Old South Church again threw open its doors to "heresy," and Rev. Samuel Norris of New Salem preached the first Methodist sermon from its pulpit. In evening of that day, a preaching service was appointed in the school-house on the Nashua corporation. A certain person whom they were not looking for soon made his appearance; for Satan came also. One of the eyewitnesses of the scene says that two beings in human form crawled through a window, blew out the lights, and in derision cried out "Glory to God." But the brethren meekly re-lighted the lamps, and Brother Norris proceeded with his discourse to the end. The brethren classed themselves together that night and pledged each other "to fight for Immanuel."

The following year they applied for admission to the New Hampshire Conference and were included in what was called the Amoskeag Circuit, and from 1832 Dunstable became a "Station." The Rev's James G. Smith and Wm. G. Lock were appointed to the new station. The little church of forty members held its meetings in the Indian Head schoolhouse. Through the liberality of one of the brethren, B. L. Jones, who gave them a lot of land on Lowell Street, they were enabled to build a church. The prejudice which was first excited against the Methodists must have disappeared; for they gratefully recognized the

generosity of friends in the other societies who aided their enterprise. The church was dedicated Nov. 12, 1833, Rev. J. G. Dow preaching the sermon. The church members numbered at that time over a hundred.

The next year, 1834, was one of trial. Four different preachers were sent them during the year, and each left because of ill health. About thirty members withdrew, and the rest grew disheartened. But on the appointment of Rev. Wm. D. Cass, in 1835, new life was infused into them. The membership was raised from 70 to 123. Liberality and punctuality characterized the financial affairs of the society. Peace and prosperity marked the history of the next ten years under the spiritual guidance of Rev's Messrs. Hatch, Jared Perkins, Kelley, Mowry and L. D. Barrows. During Mr. Hatch's charge of affairs the house was enlarged and the parsonage built.

After the separation of Nashville from Nashua, in 1844, a new church was organized out of the Lowell Street society under the name of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Nashua. The original society was thereby greatly depleted. Their troubles came not singly. A division of opinion as to slavery led a part of the church to declare themselves Wesleyans, and to secede under the leadership of B. L. Jones.* A Wesleyan Methodist Society was formed, and worshipped in the house opposite the freight depot, formerly occupied by the Free-Will Baptists, and aggravatingly near the Lowell St. Church. Another ill result was the loss of the Lowell St. meeting-house through the legal complications of the secession. The wisdom and patience of Rev. James Pike, their pastor, and of the leading brethren of the church, brought the society into clear waters, and the house was regained.

* Prof. Churchill's father was conspicuous in this movement.



OLD WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH.

The Wesleyan enterprise was not a prosperous undertaking, and two years of independency proved the folly of its continuing longer. The seceders returned to their first allegiance and were welcomed back to their old Episcopal home.

In 1847, while Henry Drew was pastor, the Temperance Reformation was the great social agitation of the day. Mr. Drew and his society, with characteristic fervor, threw themselves into the new movement, and pastor and people were foremost in their zeal and efficiency among the friends of the Reform.

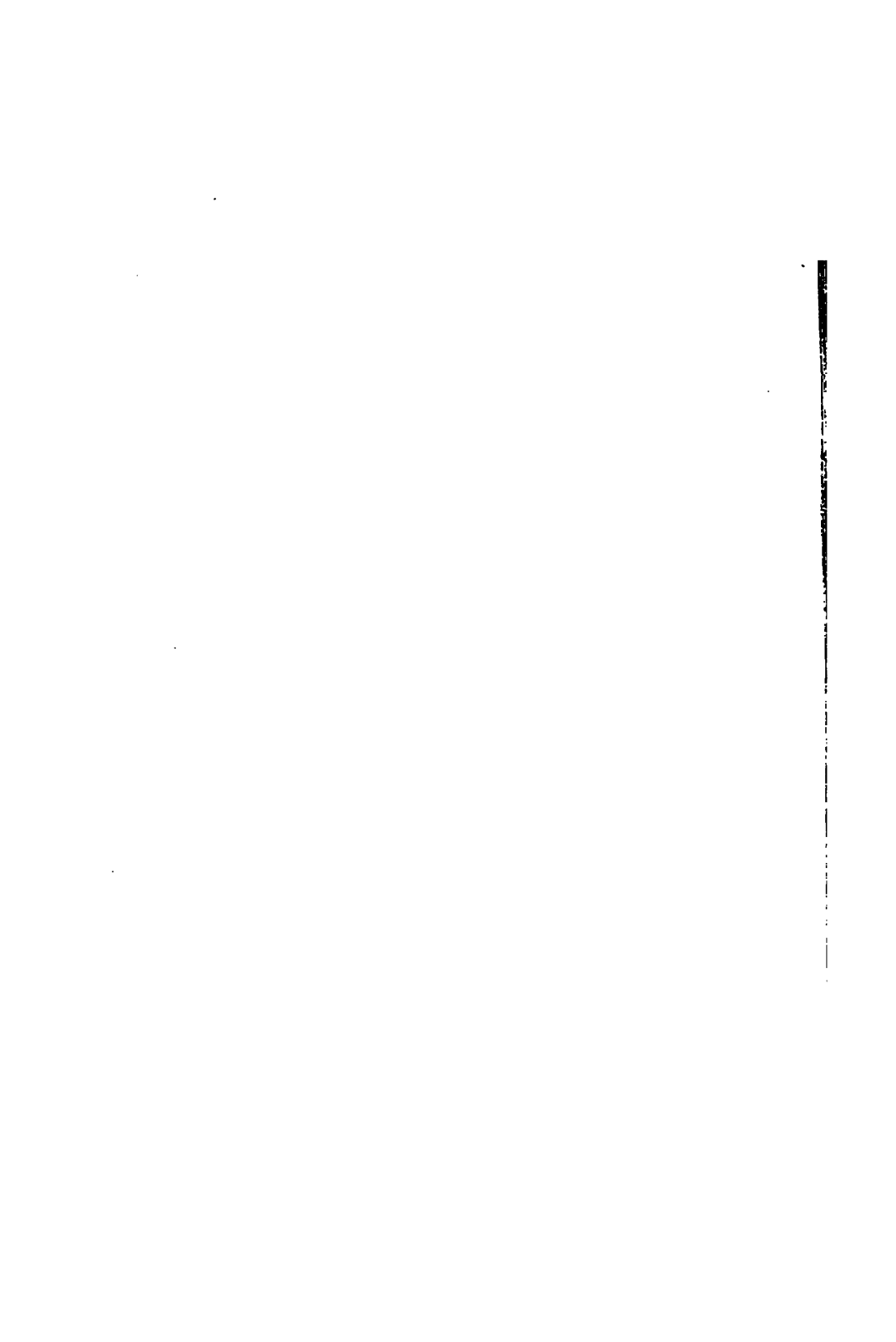
With varying fortunes the church went on under the pastoral leadership of the Rev. Messrs. Rogers, Mason, Furber, Scott, Leavitt, Hill, Harding, Howard, and Clark; until 1867, during the ministry of Rev. E. A. Smith, a new enterprise was established by due form of law known as the Trustees of the Lowell Street Methodist Episcopal Church. A public notice was printed, producing not a little astonishment among the citizens, and causing many significant shakes of wise financial heads. A stock company was formed, and in good time the beautiful and costly edifice of the Methodist Society on Main Street was finished and dedicated.

The first pastor of the society in the new church was the Rev. Geo. Bowler. He was untiring and energetic in his zeal for the welfare of the church; and his death on March 25, 1869, was a calamity to the society and to the city. His successors have been the Rev. Angelo Canol and the present pastor, the Rev. V. A. Cooper, who is in the third year of his ministry. H. A. Matteson, A. C. Manson, S. P. Heath (deceased), and Geo. F. Eaton, have been residents of Nashua who have entered the Methodist ministry while connected with this church.

The Chestnut St. Methodist Society, peacefully sepa-

rating itself from the Lowell St. Church in 1844, purchased the building formerly occupied by the Second Baptist Church. Rev. Dr. Dempster was its stated supply for some months after the formation of the church. Many of the ablest men in the New Hampshire Conference have occupied the pulpit according to the Methodist polity of settling preachers. The names of McLaughlin, Lewis Howard, Jared Perkins (who died during his pastorate in this church), C. S. Dearborn, Henry Hartwell, Sullivan Holman, L. J. Hall, W. H. Jones, R. S. Stubbs, E. R. Wilkins, D. C. Babcock, T. Carter, are all held in affectionate remembrance by this society. Under their faithful ministrations Chestnut St. Church has done a noble work for the Divine Master in this city, and its prosperity is continuing under the present pastor, Rev. H. L. Kelsey. Henry B. Clapp has entered the Methodist ministry from this church. Two of the Methodist clergy of Nashua, Jared Perkins and James Pike, have been honored in the political world by their election to the national councils in Washington; and have rendered conscientious and faithful service. In the Great Rebellion, the military spirit and skill of a fighting Methodist parson, Rev. Col. James Pike, placed the eagle straps on his shoulders.

It was not until 1845 that a sufficient number of adherents to Episcopacy were found in Nashua to warrant a request to the bishop of New Hampshire for permission to hold service here. As a result, the Rev. Milton Ward was sent to them, and divine services were held in the court room under the Town Hall. After a few months, regular ministrations were suspended, but occasional services were conducted by different clergymen from out of town. Regular services afterwards were resumed in 1857, under the rectorship of Rev. E. P. Wright, from the diocese of New Jersey. Mr. Wright remained hardly a year.





OLD EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Rev. N. W. Munroe next officiated until Rev. Wm. Stevens Perry took the regular charge of the parish. Much to the regret of the church and of a large circle of citizens whom Mr. Perry had attached to himself by his liberal culture and social activity, he resigned his charge in 1861, after a ministry of about two years.

The Rev. D. F. Banks became his successor. At the end of two years he resigned. During his rectorship a pleasant and commodious church was erected at the junction of Temple and Pearl streets. It was consecrated July 15, 1862, by Rt. Rev. Bishop Chase, of the diocese of New Hampshire. The rectors who have officiated in this church since Mr. Banks' resignation are Leonidas B. Baldwin (one year), Geo. Denham (six months), Charles L. Balch (eleven months), and C. I. Chapin (one year and five months). The unfortunate location of the church and a want of entire harmony among its members were deemed sufficient grounds for suspending church services after Mr. Chapin's resignation, which occurred in October, 1868.

The Rev. J. B. Goodrich, from the diocese of Connecticut, took charge of the parish in 1872; and services were resumed in Beasom's Hall, which had been tastefully fitted up for purposes of worship. After two years' ministration, he withdrew.

The Rev. Mr. Whitcomb, of North Haven, Conn., and Rev. James D. Hughes, late of Woodstock, Vt.,—former residents of Nashua— are clergymen of the Episcopal church.

About twenty years ago a poor Irishman, John Donahoe, from Montreal, arrived in Nashua with his family, to make his home in the thriving village he had heard spoken of as far north as the Queen's dominions. So deep-rooted was the prejudice against Papists that he was

70 "*Church of the Immaculate Conception*"—*Catholic*.

refused a lodging for the night. Col. Mark Gillis, more humane than his neighbors and indignant at their want of feeling, gave the down-hearted foreigners a resting-place in the basement of one of his buildings, and told them to occupy it until they could procure a more comfortable home. This was the first foreign family settled in Nashua.*

The construction of the Wilton Railroad attracted many other Irish families to the place, and by 1855 the Roman Catholic population was about 400. In November, 1855, the Rev. John O'Donnell took the pastoral charge of his fellow-countrymen, and commenced worship in Franklin Hall. They occupied this place for two years. A piece of land was bought for a church building lot at the harbor; but the obvious inconvenience of the location led Father O'Donnell to change the site to one much nearer the homes of his people, — and the beautiful church of the Immaculate Conception on Temple Street was consecrated in the year 1857, with unusually interesting and imposing ceremonies. The confirmation of 2,000 communicants by Bishop Bacon added to the impressiveness of the solemn scene. A poor woman kneeling in the vestibule, with clasped hands and streaming eyes, exclaiming, "Praise be to his Holy Name; He is smiling upon us at last," seemed to express the feeling of every devout Catholic on that joyful and eventful day.

The increasing industrial operations in the city have attracted thousands of foreign-born citizens to the place; and the little settlement of 400 in 1855 has grown to the size of a town within a town, and comprises more than one third of the entire population of the city. A significant

*This event probably occurred about *thirty* years ago — instead of about twenty years ago as above printed perhaps by mistake, — since quite a number of Irish are known to have been employed in the Nashua cotton mills as early as, or earlier than, the year 1848.

fact here reveals itself. In 1855 there was a population of 11,000 in the city, of these 400 were Catholics. In 1873 the city numbers 12,000 and 5,000 are Catholics — 2,000 Irish and 3,000 French citizens. The general population has been increased by only 1,000 during the eighteen years, while the Catholic has increased to nearly 5,000 in the same time. Where are the 4,000 Protestants?

With his 2,000 parishioners and 900 communicants, Father O'Donnell has the largest congregation in the city, except that of the French Catholic Church. As an evidence of the respect and affection entertained for the worthy father by his own flock, I mention the presentation of splendid vestments to their pastor some time ago, valued at \$600, which his people cheerfully contributed from their daily earnings.

Notwithstanding the strong prejudice against the Romanists twenty years ago, Father O'Donnell has never received anything but respect and courtesy from his Protestant neighbors, with one trifling exception on the part of three rude young fellows, whose thoughtless incivility was nipped in the bud by the ready wit and good humor of the priest.

There was a time when it was thought by some credulous people that a part of the apparatus belonging to the Spanish Inquisition had actually come to Nashua and was in good working order at the priest's house. The worthy father brought with him his iron bedstead, which was a very peculiar piece of furniture in those days. Two gray-headed Protestants employed in carting the furniture inquired what that iron frame was? The priest gravely replied that it was a rack on which he stretched Protestants until they would consent to become good Catholics. The old men left in terror, and proclaimed that Father O'Donnell had an instrument of torture in his house, and warned all

Protestants as they valued their lives to avoid the priest's house. One of our well-known lawyers, now dead, unintentionally scandalized his friends by walking on the street with the priest, and was severely rebuked for his loose example. To see this same Rev. Father sitting in friendly council on the school board and listened to with respectful deference by his Protestant companions in office, presents a strong contrast to the popular prejudice against the Spanish Inquisitor and disreputable Papist of 1855.

The organic unity of the church, so strongly insisted upon as the dominant idea of the Romish church, finds here a fitting expression in the concentration of the church polity in the personal government of a single individual, the venerable Pope of Nashua, John O'Donnell. This church, too, has its coming clergy among its own members. Four of its boys are at St. Hyacinthe in Canada, and one is at Rome preparing for the Catholic priesthood.

The last ecclesiastical organization found here is the French Catholic church, outnumbering their Irish co-religionists by 1000 in the marvellously short space of five years. The French Catholic population have won for themselves a good name for industry, economy, and a regard for public order. Their new church, erected at an expense of \$40,000, is one of the finest specimens of church architecture in the state. Father Millette is already held in high esteem by his English-speaking fellow-citizens, and all Christian hearts rejoice that every citizen of Nashua can hear in his own tongue of the wonderful works of God.

Though Protestants and Catholics are widely separated in doctrine and polity from each other in many important particulars, we welcome Father O'Donnell and Father Millette into our clerical circle, not because St. Peter's benediction rests upon their heads in apostolic succession, but because they proclaim the religion of Christ as the

regenerating power to save and purify the soul, and to renovate and preserve civil society.

Fellow-citizens and friends, such are some of the circumstances of the origin and progress of our local religious institutions. Gladly would I have prepared myself to make the record of the deeds and sacrifices of our church fathers more worthy of this festival hour. Most gladly would I have expended double the time and labor, had it been possible, to deliver something proportionate to the great theme, and deserving of the great audience assembled to do honor to Nashua's forgotten worthies. Your patience would not have been so severely tested if I had had time to make the story shorter. The materials necessary for a complete and lively picture have been so imperfect, and so scattered, and the leisure demanded for the skillful treatment of the theme has been so sternly denied me that I have fallen far below my conception of what is due to the occasion.

Most gladly would I have spoken less *about* the men and their deeds, and have let you hear the men themselves speak and reveal their characters in their own language, and have let you see the passions at work in their hearts that shaped their action. But it was impossible to do so and be truthful; for no word of theirs, no letters, pamphlets, books, sermons, or speeches have been left to their posterity beyond the plain, concise record of the parish clerk; and I feel that imagination has a nobler office in writing history than that of supplying motives, words and deeds where they do not exist in fact. But if I have succeeded in enlightening you, as I have sincerely tried to do by first enlightening myself, with an accurate and authentic narrative of what our fathers have done for us in the past — if we have had our sympathies awakened for what was noble in their lives, their sacrifices, and their toils, and

have learned to deplore and avoid what was mistaken in method and but little in character,— I shall find some consolation in the regret that I feel for the incompetent performance of the duty assigned me.

But while the past is reviewed and contemporary history is glanced at, the duties of the day would be incomplete if we paused here. As we enter upon the third century of our ecclesiastical life, shall we give no heed to the voice of experience? Should we not dwell with earnest solicitude upon the future? We possess not the gift of prophecy. That is the privilege of the highest order of genius only. We would draw no horoscopes. What we predict would not come to pass. The greatest of the world's heroes would not have risked so much or believed so profoundly if they could have foreseen some of the fruits of their labor. Washington would hardly have braved Valley Forge if he could have foreseen Libby Prison and the martyrdom of Lincoln. While we may not anticipate the outcome of our fathers' achievements, we yet may learn a lesson for our own duty. The outward conditions of our fathers' problems can never be ours. Their work has altered everything for us; but the Moral Law, written in eternal tablets, which they endeavored to obey and sometimes violated, will forever sound down the ages as the voice of God. The one great lesson that our history teaches with distinctness to the church of the future is that the church, as well as nations and individuals, must be founded on justice, truth, and love, or it will crumble to pieces. Unloving words, unrighteous deeds, falsehoods of lip or life will have their price at last. The church whose individual members love righteousness, do mercy and walk humbly with God, will find assurance that within her walls shall be peace and prosperity.

While we have many reasons to celebrate this anni-

versary with joy, we have seen, in the unhappy contentions of three quarters of a century in the life of the church, that our forefathers were men and had their faults and passions as well as their virtues,— and that they stand fully as much beacons of solemn warning, as examples for our imitation, in the church of the past. Her days of union were her days of strength; her days of disruption were her days of weakness. Their dispersions in the wilderness, before the savage foe, was as nothing to the estranged hearts of a once united Christian brotherhood bound together by their participation in common dangers and achievements.

We have moved to-day among the graves of our church fathers. In scattered churchyards

“ Where heaves the turf in many a mold’ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.”

If we could open the graves of two hundred years and interrogate the sleepers therein, what voices of encouragement, what notes of expostulation should we all hear! It is believed by many

“ That millions of spiritual beings walk the earth,
Both when we wake and when we sleep.”

Who shall say that this visible assembly is the only assembly present in this tabernacle? Who knows but that Weld and Prentice and Lovewell and Blanchard and Tyng and all the sainted company who have preceded us to the Still Country have been with us in more intimate presence than our blinding veil of sense permits us to see? If the veil which hides the invisible world were withdrawn, would they not speak to us in tones such as only *they* can use? What looks of love do they cast upon us! What

unseen glances of unspeakable tenderness and sympathy! How they plead with us to love one another, to make the best of one another, to understand and appreciate one another,— to love, in spite of our faults and in spite of our differences! There is no other way, my friends, to be true to the solemn trust our fathers have so reverently and tenderly committed to us. Only in proportion as we *really* love the Lord Jesus, and endeavor to gain a better mutual appreciation of the peculiar spirit of every church, and gladly recognize the inward semblance which exists in outer diversities — only in this mighty, unifying spirit of brotherly love — can we be faithful to the solemn trust our fathers have bequeathed to us. As we leave their graves, let us turn them into altars, and pledge ourselves to one another to honor their memories and their works by heeding their heavenly counsels. Let us pledge ourselves to Christ our Head that we will endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let us pledge ourselves to one another to forever put to sleep the ghosts of ancient disputes, and to keep forever before our eyes the golden words of old prophetic inspiration, “Behold how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in *unity*.”

So shall the church of the future, on coming anniversaries like this, look back to us with tearful gratitude and remembrances of devout affection. So shall they gather round our dust, and bless God that they *were* descended from men who were not degenerate, but *who* lived for their children and their children’s children.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH OF PROF. CHURCHILL.

John Wesley Churchill:— a significant name — in itself, suggestive of christian nurture and its need! Thus outwardly consecrated by pious parents, we may well believe he was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

He was born in Fairlee, Vt., a son of Capt. John Emery Churchill and Eliza Ann (Coburn) Churchill. His parents moved, with their family, to Nashua, N. H., when he was but seven years old. There he spent most of his boyhood, and received elementary instruction in the public schools. At first sadly diffident, he fled from nearly all older persons who showed a disposition to talk with him. But later, growing in confidence and manifesting more than common ability and excellence of character, he drew to himself many friends, young and old, some of whom generously encouraged him to seek a higher education.

For a while he was a student at Appleton Academy, New Ipswich, N. H., where he made commendable progress in his studies, especially in mathematics.

At the age of seventeen, he went to Iowa, and was engaged for two years in civil engineering in connection with the building of the bridge over the Mississippi River at Davenport.

Returning East, he began his preparation for college at Ballston Spa (N. Y.) Academy for Boys, — at the same time teaching elocution and mathematics. Going thence to Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., in 1859, he completed his preparatory course there, and entered Harvard College, — whence he graduated in 1865. Soon afterwards he took the full course of study in Andover Theo-

78 *Biographic Sketch of Prof. Churchill.*

logical Seminary; and, on the day of his graduation in 1868, was appointed Jones professor of Elocution in the Seminary. But he did not engage in the work of his professorship until after a year of special study in Europe.

On his return from Europe, he was united in marriage, July 27, 1869, to Mary Donald, daughter of Dea. William Cooper Donald and Agnes Bain (Smart) Donald of Andover.

To his duties as professor of Elocution, which were always discharged with the utmost satisfaction to the Seminary, were added — after long service — those of lecturer on Sacred Literature in the years 1894 to 1896. During the latter year, he was made Bartlet professor of Sacred Rhetoric. Both of these professorships were admirably filled by him to the end of his distinguished career.

During his first year at the Seminary, he taught elocution in Abbot and Phillips academies at Andover. His services to both, in this capacity, lasted as long as those to the Seminary.

As a lecturer on, or teacher of, elocution, he was connected with the School of Oratory in Boston University, from 1873 to 1879, — with Mt. Holyoke Seminary (now a college) from 1875 to 1882, — with Smith College, from 1876 to 1880, — with Wellesley College, from 1877 to 1878, — with Johns Hopkins University, in 1880, — and with Harvard Divinity School, from 1890 to 1896.

For longer or shorter periods, he gave instruction in public speaking at Amherst, Brown, Dartmouth and other colleges. The number of students whom he trained individually, in connection with public debates, prize speaking and Commencement parts, was surprisingly large.

Until the latter part of his life, he met numberless appointments as a public reader — not only in prominent



PROF. JOHN WESLEY CHURCHILL.

courses of literary entertainments, but often in small towns and for the aid of feeble churches.

Although he was never the regular pastor of any church, serving from sabbath to sabbath, he preached in turn, as one of the pastors of the Seminary Church at Andover, and officiated frequently in the pulpits of Amherst and Harvard colleges and elsewhere in New England.

The degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by Dartmouth College in 1896.

He was a trustee of Abbot Academy from 1870 to the end of his life; and was a member of the Corporation of the School of Expression (in Boston) from its foundation about the year 1870, — and president of its Board of Trustees several years. By vote of the Corporation, the School conferred on him a purple and gold Star of Honor, as the foremost reader in this country, in 1896.

A few years later, he became ill with grippe, which resulted in heart-failure, April 13, 1900. Thus his earthly toils were ended and his spirit passed to its heavenly reward.

For a just appreciation of his manhood, it seems best to set forth what was said of him by some of his most intimate associates, in their personal tributes published — with many others — soon after his decease.

REV. DEWITT S. CLARK, D.D., of Salem, a Seminary classmate and familiar friend, said: — “How can we think of the world without our dear Churchill?” . . . His “life was so full, so radiant, so blessed, . . . that we never imagined that *he* would ever pass out of our earthly companionship till its full limit had been reached. But it was complete, if we regard God’s measure, though to us it seems sadly interrupted in its useful mission.

80 *Biographic Sketch of Prof. Churchill.*

"He was 'every inch' a man — in body, mind, and soul. He was the real Christian gentleman. Classmates and fellow-students, somehow, each thought they knew him a little better than others, so patent and genuine was his friendliness to all. An abounding geniality drew to him even comparative strangers. Virtue went out of him to not a few whom he never knew.

"He first came into prominence as a public reader. With a voice of wide range and exceptional quality, with a sense of humor which every feature expressed, with the tenderness of a child and a spirit easily sharing the most tragic or pathetic experiences, he readily passed from the entertainer of an hour to the teacher, helper and comforter of the ignorant, the perplexed, and the sorrowing. The many who only casually saw or heard him gave him first rank as a professionalist. He made them laugh, and they went on their way the cheerier for it. He brought tears to their eyes, and they felt the better for it. But merely to play on the heart strings, for a little while, grew irksome to him. He was not content to be an elocutionist, worthy as such a calling is. He would be something more than a caterer to the ever-pressing demand for amusement. If he could lift the art of public speaking out of the commonplace and make it the medium of effective appeal and persuasion — the interpreter of eternal truths — that was his holier ambition.

"His appointment, after years of distinguished service in voice culture and oratorical methods, to the professorship [of Homiletics] in the Theological Seminary, he counted his greatest honor. It gave him what he was specially fitted for, the chance to direct the preachers of the future in the science of public address. His love of proportion and harmony in homiletic composition, his keen sense of propriety, his instant recognition of pertinent or alien

thought, his choice of the happiest word or phrase made him invaluable as a critic. Scripture, prayer, hymn, were, in his view, quite as important as the sermon; and he made them quite as much a study. With him the wedding of perfect intonation with the fit word — which seemed so simple — was the result of patient and careful discipline. It was his joy to preach, not by way of example to learners, but because he had something to say. How acceptably and grandly, yet without display, he did it! Then you saw the man behind the message; though he never preached himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and himself a servant for Jesus' sake.

"Congregational worship, he thought, should be made as stately and inspiring as that which depends on ritual or outward symbol for effect. Reverence was a controlling passion with him. His voice and bearing in the pulpit always made the impression that the preacher had solemn business in hand. In the few years of his service in his conspicuous position, he showed increasing ability and fitness for the trust committed to him, and worthily maintained its high traditions. His intellectual mintage was from choice materials; his literary touch was delicate; his analysis of the elements of strength in popular writers and speakers was suggestive and true.

"Above and beyond all these characteristics of his professional life, was his eminent helpfulness. To whom was he not a friend? I do not recall a single sentiment or word I could wish he had not uttered. Of pure imagination and pure speech, it was always healthful to be in his company. His correspondence was simply boundless; since he not only 'cared for all the churches,' but for multitudes out of their pale as well. With a memory which never failed to retain both name and circumstance of the humblest, no less than the famous, — with a manner which

said to one and all, 'command me,' — he kept widening and strengthening the bonds which attached multitudes to him, till he staggered under the load of their expectations. A vacation was an almost unknown experience, while the calls for all service kept ever coming to him. The rest which his active spirit could not find here, the all-wise Father has given to him above — the rest of the people of God. And so we are glad, though lonely without sight of him whose 'leaf' seems to have 'perished in the green.' "

PRINCIPAL C. P. BANCROFT, of Phillips (Andover) Academy, said: — "Any record of Prof. Churchill's service in the 'trinity of Andover schools,' as he liked to phrase it, must make large mention of his loyalty to the religious, educational and literary traditions of the place. His residence, except for his four years at Harvard, was here for over forty years — practically for all his professional life. The large amount of work he did elsewhere was incidental. Here were his interests and his affections. The whole community claimed him. He made it a chief end to be a good citizen. . . . In his special position as an instructor, he was always a considerate, generous, and cooperative colleague. . . . Nature seemed to have prescribed to him his departments; but he would have done excellent work in many others.

"In personal instruction and criticism he was supreme. He was an inspiring and creative force in the lives of thousands of pupils; and gave them such a pattern of adherence to the highest standards of excellence and of unfailing charity that they became his life-long personal friends. His work was more than elocution; it was the interpretation of literature. To teach homiletics and the pastoral care was the natural outcome of his taste, temperament, and training. All his studies led up to this, the crowning work of his life.

"Only those who lived side by side with Prof. Churchill could have knowledge of his marvelous industry. He was always at work, and a hard worker. Fragments of time, the early morning, the late night, hours of travel and seeming recreation, were all put to use. . . . 'Trifles make up perfection, and perfection is no trifle' was a motto often on his lips.

"The thoroughness and severity of his work was always dignified by an exceptional magnanimity. In his teaching he was never cynical, sarcastic, or petulant. When he rebuked and criticised, it was always with appreciation and sympathy. He could correct a fault or an offender without causing humiliation or irritation. — 'Still pleased to praise, but not afraid to blame.' "

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES OF MICHIGAN issued a sterling tribute to the memory of Prof. Churchill — prepared by an Advisory Editorial Committee consisting of Rev. James McAllister of Detroit, Rev.'s John P. Sanderson and E. B. Allen of Lansing, Rev. R. M. Higgins of Constantine, and Rev. J. A. Blaisdell of Olivet, all or nearly all of whom, it may safely be presumed, were former pupils of Prof. Churchill. This tribute speaks of him as one of the best and most deservedly popular professors that ever adorned the halls of Andover. It mentions many of his noble qualities in terms similar to those in the tributes already quoted. In addition to these encomiums, it says: —

"Although he had achieved honors early in life, the highest came late; and the chair of Homiletics had still the charm of newness to him when he died. This chair afforded him the opportunity for closer, more protracted, work in the study than was possible during his earlier and more public career, when frequent appearances on the

platform and giving instruction in several New England colleges made great demands on his time and strength and kept him much from home and the study.

"Andover is distinguished for the scholars, the theologians, the exegetes that she has trained, and who in turn have served her; but with none of these is the late Prof. Churchill to be compared. Some men are profound scholars, and that is all we can say of them. Others fill a chair with merit or even with distinction, but outside of it have little or no influence. They do not leave their mark upon the students; but nature had so mixed the elements in Prof. Churchill that above all he was a man, — generous, sympathetic, unselfish and magnanimous. Bunyan might have taken him for the type of his Greatheart. . . .

"Not the least valuable of his work was that done in Phillips Academy in turning awkward boys into graceful speakers, sometimes to the amazement, always to the delight, of their friends. Those who have received such instruction will never forget it, nor ever cease to be grateful for it. . . .

"For years he delighted New England audiences with readings culled from the best English literature. Others were his rivals in the same field, but none of them gave such genuine satisfaction to an audience of highly intelligent people. As an interpreter of Dickens he was without a peer. In the same lecture course with such princes of the platform as Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher and John B. Gough, not the least enjoyable evening of the course was the night of the Churchill readings, — as a crowded house and enthusiastic audience testified. It was such power and such popularity that induced certain Lecture Bureaus to attempt to capture him; but he steadfastly resisted all their blandishments. The offer of four times the salary that Andover could afford failed to draw

him from his chosen work of instructing lads fitting for college and young men fitting for the ministry.

"Not once nor twice was he approached by church committees looking for a strong man to fill an important pastorate; but to such calls he turned a deaf ear.

"His fine literary taste was evident in pulpit, on the platform and in the class-room; and yet somehow his full intellectual force was overlooked, — it may have been that it was overshadowed by other qualities that made him popular, but by a false psychology were not thought of as intellectual. . . .

"His wide knowledge of men and his great human sympathy enabled him to see and feel the needs of men — their spiritual needs — and prompted him to study how he could meet them and help others to do likewise. . . .

"His ideal pastor was not a pale theological student in a white necktie, but a man among men, a man with iron in his blood, living a wholesome, happy life, enjoying all the good things that God has given him — a gentleman, seeking to win men to Christ by the open heart and open hand."

REV. HARRY P. DEWEY, D.D., at an Alumni Dinner in Andover, June 13, 1901, said: — "Two friends talked with one another, as they returned from the cemetery yonder, whither his body had just been borne; and one told of a kindness which Prof. Churchill had shown him. 'Yes!' replied the other friend, 'that is what *every one* is saying to-day, — What he did for me.' — This man of consolation and cheer, who felt in his sensitive heart the pain of others as his own, once wrote a letter to a friend who had suffered grief, saying that he thought the best word descriptive of the other life was *Reunion*; and surely, in the sense of bereavement which is upon us at this hour,

we all feel that Heaven will grant us a happier entrance, if the *dear, beloved Churchill* is to be at the open gate, — to bid us welcome."

DR. S. S. CURRY, *President of the Boston School of Expression*, said of him — in a publication issued soon after Prof. Churchill's decease: —

"We have lost not only the best known but the most artistic of our public readers. He believed in reading rather than impersonating. He always had his text before him.

"Among the characteristics of his art were his subtle power and delicate truthfulness in transitions, a fine instinct of unity and harmony, a marvelously sympathetic genuineness and naturalness, and the breadth and depth of his humor, which — as Thackeray says — sheds tears. His magnetism was most inspiring.

"His annual visits to the School of Expression were always occasions of great joy to all the teachers as well as students. He brought always a restful repose, and a genial sympathy with his audience that put everyone at his ease and soothed into calmness the perturbed agitations and weariness of his most nervous hearer.

"His interpretations of Dickens' characters were very unique — wholly different from those of Prof. Eastey, who made a life-long study of the representations of this author. His reading of the Charity Dinner was totally different from that of Ballou, for whom the selection was originally written. Indeed, all his work was original, and bore the mark of a dramatic, creative genius. His famous reading from Hamlet was thoroughly unconventional, and showed a finely conceived harmony between the grotesque elements in the grave-digger, the passion of Laertes, and the subdued intensity of Hamlet. His rendering of Ros-

setti's great lyric, Sister Helen, was poetic and intense; and embodied, in his rendering of the refrain, his idea of the Greek chorus.

"The most difficult of dialects, the Lancashire, was so suggested by him that every word could be distinctly understood. The same is true of his Irish, his French, and his Scotch dialects. All were given, not as an artificial imitation, but as a representation of dramatic insight; they were always expressive of types of character.

"Prof. Churchill . . . was one of the editors of the Andover Review, and contributed many articles of great interest upon noted speakers.* . . .

"He was every inch an artist. Associated as he was, all his life, with professors and scholars; yet — by his imaginative and sympathetic instinct, by his intuitive power to 'do the thing that breeds the thought,' by his noble suggestion and intimation of his seeing things from different points of view, [and] by his power of assimilation and [his] understanding of human nature — he was one who could mould his fellowmen by direct portrayal, better than by reflective and persuasive teaching. . . .

"Can I dare to speak in cold print of that beautiful personality, that marvelous friend, that sympathetic adviser, that loyal heart?

"His life was gentle; and the elements
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, 'This was a man.'"

"What a crowd gathered at his funeral! There . . . I saw painters, musicians and literary men, lawyers

* An eminent scholar and critic, known throughout the country and long acquainted with Prof. Churchill, is reported to have said of him that, in his best judgment, he was one of the five ablest reviewers in the United States.

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and judges, who had come long distances to pay him their last tribute.

"His body sleeps on that famous hill, by the side of the distinguished men who had for long years filled the chairs at Andover, — not far from the grave of Harriet Beecher Stowe, of whom he was a personal friend and of whose works he was the greatest interpreter. . . . As I came down to take the train, I could not endure the thought that I could no more come to him for counsel and inspiration, for strength and patience, in carrying out the great work to which I have given my life."

It may be well to ask: How was Prof. Churchill regarded during the latter part of his life by his old friends and acquaintances in Nashua, — did they continue to like him as well as in his earlier years? Let us see!

THE NASHUA DAILY PRESS, in its issue of April 14, 1900, said: — "Prof. John Wesley Churchill, D.D., died at his home in Andover, Mass., on Good Friday, at the age of 61 years. He was a son of the late Capt. John E. Churchill of blessed memory in the Main street Methodist Church and in the hearts of all Nashuans who knew him. . . . Brought up in this city, he came here frequently in the lifetime of his parents, kept in touch with the people, and delivered the address at the bi-centennial of old Dunstable and the dedicatory sermon of the present First Congregational Church. . . . He had often preached in the church mentioned, of which he was . . . a member. . . . Of his memory, no words are too eulogistic to be spoken. He was a sincere man, faithful in all things, a scholarly gentleman, a reader without a peer, a minister of the gospel of eloquence and power. He rests from his labors, and his name is blessed."



PRESENT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

Biographic Sketch of Prof. Churchill. 89

THE NASHUA DAILY TELEGRAPH, in its issue of April 14, 1900, said of Prof. Churchill:— "Although not a resident of this city for many years, John Wesley Churchill has always been looked upon as a 'Nashua boy.' . . . Nashua was always loyal to him, and the boys and girls who were in school with him never wearied in speaking their praise of him to the younger generation."

THE MANCHESTER MIRROR of like date, after speaking of his scholarly attainments and ability as a preacher and elocutionist, said:— "*He was the embodiment of unselfishness and a husband and father of unusual tenderness and devotion.*"

A little more than a year after Prof. Churchill's decease, a life-like portrait of him, of rare artistic merit, was presented to Phillips Academy. The gift was fittingly announced, in an admirable letter from Prof. John Phelps Taylor, as follows:—

Andover, Mass.,
May 18, 1901.

Principal Bancroft, D.D., LL.D.,

Dear Dr. Bancroft:—

The pupils and friends of the late Professor John Wesley Churchill herewith present to Phillips Academy the portrait of one of her most honored and beloved sons and instructors.

They lay this treasure fitly at the feet of the Mother of the Seminary, from whose chair of sacred rhetoric he went so early to his crown.

They recall, with admiring pride, the judgment, the conscience, the manliness, the culture, the geniality, the disinterestedness, the humor, the pathos, the charm, the fin-

ish, the devotion to duty, the kindness toward man, the reverence for God, which were his in rare degree.

They desire that his ardor for perfection may live in the school he loved and in the community he adorned. Thanks to your sympathetic cooperation and to the genius and generosity of the artist — Mr. Paul Selinger, — the Academy becomes the owner of a speaking likeness of a noble spirit.

The many donors rejoice to believe that Phillips today receives, in this glowing canvas, an inspiration to the highest, not unworthy of the lamented dead.

With high respect and esteem, I am

Yours cordially and sympathetically,

JOHN PHELPS TAYLOR.

Not long after the presentation of the portrait, there was contributed to the Memorial Room in which it had been placed a massive bronze tablet bearing the inscription shown below:—

TO THE BELOVED MEMORY OF
JOHN WESLEY CHURCHILL
DOCTOR IN DIVINITY PROFESSOR IN THIS SEAT OF
RELIGION AND LEARNING
FOR THE SPACE OF TWO AND THIRTY YEARS
A PREACHER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
MAGNANIMITY SERVICEABLENESS AND GRACE
MADE A NATURE GIFTED AND TENDER
A POWER FOR PEACE A FOUNTAIN OF GOOD
HE TAUGHT MEN HOW TO MAKE TRUTH WINSOME
1839—1900

Since the removal of Andover Theological Seminary to Cambridge, Mass., this tablet has been transferred to the Phillips Academy Chapel on Andover Hill.

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In conclusion, the writer of this biographic sketch is constrained to say that, from first to last, he has felt that he was treating of *one whose character was altogether unique*, and that no words of his could do justice to the rare personal worth of his subject. It is therefore his earnest prayer that the friends of Prof. Churchill, and especially the Church of which he was so long a member, will continue to cherish his memory with ardent affection, and will be ennobled and sanctified through his personal influence. And may God richly reward his Christ-like efforts and self-denials!

THE END.

APPENDIX.

JOHN ELIOT, familiarly known in history as the Apostle to the Indians, was born in Nazing, Essex County, England, in the year 1604. Having decided in his early youth to become a minister of the gospel, he pursued a course of study at Jesus College, Cambridge University, and took orders in the Church of England.

Soon afterwards he became a non-conformist, and went to America. Having preached a year at a church in Boston, he was called in 1632 to a pastorate in Roxbury; where he fixed his permanent abode and did the chief work of his subsequent life. Fortunately his cares were lessened by the companionship of an estimable wife, who came from England to accept his hand in marriage, and who survived until near the period of his death.

From about the time of his settlement in America, Eliot was carefully considerate of the welfare of its Indian tribes. Although he received at first but little encouragement in this benevolent disposition, from his familiar associates, he soon won the favor of Winslow, the agent in England of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, — and thus brought about the incorporation in 1640 of a British Society to furnish funds for christianizing the Indians. To this society, Harvard College, in its early days, was largely indebted for the help which made it an important liberalizing force in America. In 1647 the General Court of Massachusetts voted a gratuity to Eliot of ten pounds sterling for his missionary work.

Former efforts for christianizing the Indians seldom went far enough to relieve them from the most degrading

associations; and therefore resulted in but little more than a suspension of their hostilities against the whites. Eliot planned to segregate them in *praying bands*, the members of which should be taught to read and write, should be supplied with the Holy Scriptures in a language they could understand, and should be favored with frequent missionary visits for the explanation of religious truths.

An Indian, taken in one of the Pequot wars and who became a resident of Dorchester, was the first native to teach him words in the Indian language known as the Wampanoag, which was spoken throughout the Province of Rhode Island and to a considerable extent beyond. This language, Eliot saw fit to adopt as the most serviceable for his translation of the Bible. Eventually he gained a knowledge of it which, for sacred purposes, probably was unsurpassed by that of any other person whose mother-tongue was English.

To the Indians, he first preached, without an interpreter, at Nonantum — now Brighton, Mass. This was the beginning of his systematic missionary labors which resulted in the establishment of an Indian settlement at Natick in 1651-52, and afterwards of about a dozen other settlements. His journeyings early took him into southeastern Massachusetts and afterwards up the valley of the Merrimac to the falls where Lowell now stands and thence to Nashua, — at both of which places he was cordially received alike by red men and whites. He was particularly successful in favorably impressing the two chief sachems in southern New Hampshire — Passaconaway and Wannalancet — both of whom remained to the end of their days his steadfast friends.

In one of his visits to Nashua, he engaged a competent man to look out a route for a bridle-path thence, up the Merrimac valley, to Amoskeag Falls, and to attend to its

construction. The bridle-path was provided — much to the satisfaction of the Indians in the neighborhood — some of whom were employed in the work. It was paid for by Eliot. Many years later the city of Manchester, noted for its manufactures — especially of cotton goods — sprang up along the lower course of Amoskeag Falls.

The translation of the Bible by John Eliot, into the Wampanoag language, was completed in 1658. His New Testament was published at Cambridge, Mass., in 1661, and his Old Testament in 1663. But, although he lived until 1690 — blessed till near his end with rare bodily and mental vigor, and remarkable for his sweetness of temper and winning persuasiveness — his hopes of bringing multitudes of the red men to Christ were never realized.

Many reasons may be assigned for his failure. The great majority of the whites were unwilling to coöperate with him. They believed that the Indians would hold fast to their usual modes of support chiefly by hunting and fishing. Rangers of the forests liked these pursuits better than cultivating the soil. Besides, the white population — which was growing numerous — steadily encroached upon the red men's hunting grounds and fishing resorts; and so compelled their retirement. In most instances, however, their lands were bought for a satisfactory consideration. One of the chief factors in causing trouble between the two races undoubtedly was the almost universal indulgence in alcoholic drinks. The Indians soon shared in this indulgence; and often were led thereby into the wildest excesses. Thus wars were generated, which begot a lasting hatred, and resulted in great destruction of lives and property. What is known as King Philip's War, which began in 1675 — was largely of this class. King Philip (so called by the whites) was the chief sachem of the Wampanoags, his Indian name being Metacomet.

The story of the war as briefly told in the *New International Encyclopædia* (ed. 1907), vol. xv, p. 707 — is as follows: —

“About 1670 Philip’s friendly intentions began to be suspected on account of frequent meetings of the tribes and many murders of white settlers. In view of these suspicions, Philip and the principal tribesmen were summoned to meet the whites and explain their movements. This they did, and also agreed to surrender their arms; but it was only a truce, and preparations for war were still secretly carried on by the Indians. An Indian convert named Sausamon revealed to the colonists the preparations made by Philip, and was murdered by the Indians. In revenge for the execution of his murderers by the whites, the Indians killed eight or nine colonists, and open hostilities were begun in June, 1675. The Indians did not venture to meet the colonists in battle, but burned or attacked a number of their settlements, including Swansea, Brookfield, Deerfield, and Hadley, and laid ambuscades for the settlers.

“In December, 1675, Governor Josiah Winslow led a force of 1000 men against the Narragansets, with whom Philip had formed an alliance, took by storm a fort said to have contained 4000 Indians, near the present location of Kingston, R. I., destroyed their village of 500 wigwams, and put to death 500 of their warriors and twice as many Indian women and children. The war went on for the first six months of 1676, and was marked by burnings and massacres at Weymouth, Groton, Medfield, and Lancaster, Mass., and at Warwick and Providence, R. I. But the increased efforts of the colonists soon struck demoralization into the ranks of the Indians. A substantial reward was offered by the Government for every Indian killed in

battle, and many Indian women and children were captured and sold into slavery.

"Among the latter were Philip's wife and son, who were sold, not to a buyer living near — from whom Philip could have redeemed them on condition of his abandoning the war — but to a purchaser in the Bermudas, who, it is presumed, disposed of them afterwards (not unlikely in the Spanish West Indies) without regard to their ultimate fate.

"A force under the command of the great Indian fighter, Capt. Benjamin Church, hunted Philip from place to place, at last locating him through the aid of a friendly Indian in a swamp near Mount Hope, where he was killed by another Indian while trying to escape. His body was quartered on a Thanksgiving Day especially appointed, and his head was sent to Plymouth, where it was long kept on a gibbet.

"During this war some 600 colonists were killed, 600 buildings burned, and 13 towns destroyed, but of the two once powerful Indian tribes it is said that less than 200 individuals were left. The cost of the war was estimated at \$1,000,000."

But the war did not end with the death of Philip; it continued some time thereafter with growing embitterment.

Eliot did what he could, during the progress of the war, to lessen its horrors and to protect persons who were unjustly accused of wrongful conduct relating to its prosecution.

From that time on, for more than a century, the feeling of discouragement respecting the Indians was so strong that but little was done for their betterment. In 1824, William Cullen Bryant wrote a poem, called "An Indian at the Burial Place of His Fathers", which contained the

following pathetic lines as to their ill treatment by the whites: —

" They waste us — ay — like April snow
In the warm noon, we shrink away;
And fast they follow, as we go,
Toward the setting day —
Till they shall fill the land, and we
Are driven into the Western sea."

Nine years later, Samuel G. Drake, a member of the New Hampshire Historical Society, who was the author of a highly instructive work called " Drake's Book of the Indians", put the foregoing lines on its title page, as showing his frank recognition of the truth they express. His Book contains an excellent sketch of the life of King Philip.

It must be admitted that Philip was vindictive, treacherous and cruel — very unlike his father Massasoit who was exceptionally honest and almost always friendly to the whites.

Regarding King Philip's war, the editor of the present book is constrained to say, after examining many works on the subject: — including especially those of the eminent, fair minded scholar, Jared Sparks — that a good number of the authors who have written about it seem to be much influenced by personal bias, — others, by reluctance to tell the whole truth, lest they be drawn into a vexatious controversy. The theme is of unusual interest — far beyond that of the later French and Indian War, which has received more generous attention. Probably two or three generations hence it may be treated more satisfactorily than at present.

For many years during the latter half of the nineteenth century, James Hammond Trumbull of Hartford, Conn., was the only person living who could read Eliot's Indian Bible. One of the foremost of American philolo-

gists, he was conversant not merely with numerous languages of the Old World, but had mastered the speech of a great number of Indian tribes in widely separated districts of the New World.

The picture of John Eliot, shown on page 7 of the present book, was taken from a portrait discovered in London in 1851 by Hon. William Whiting, a distinguished lawyer long resident in Roxbury, who was familiar with the personal history of Eliot. It was bought by him, and brought home.

MR. IRA F. HARRIS, of Nashua, is entitled to our thanks for supplying us with the photographs of localities and buildings in Dunstable-Nashua from which many pictures in this book were taken. A descendant of one of the first settlers here, he has contributed much to a knowledge of its early history. Besides, he has aided not a little in rendering attractive the city of Nashua as it now stands.

MR. FEDERICO GLENTON, a skillful Nashua photographer of many years' experience, also has done much for us.

Of our indebtedness to the DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, it is hardly necessary to speak. The historic tokens and monuments provided by their generosity are numerous.

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